

# THE USES OF LIBRARIES



# THE USES OF LIBRARIES

EDITED BY  
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LIBRARIANSHIP

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## PREFACE TO SECOND EDITION

THE contributors and editor are glad to find that this work has proved its usefulness by the demand for a new edition. It has been brought up to date where recent library developments have required this, and the bibliographical appendix has been revised and amplified by Miss Winifred A. Myers, and the index by Miss Ursula S. M<sup>c</sup>Curdy, to whom they express their grateful acknowledgments. The supplementary chapter on "Light Literature in Public Libraries" was originally given as a lecture at University College, and then appeared in *The Hibbert Journal*: it is here reprinted by the kind permission of the editor.

*April 1930.*

## P R E F A C E

THIS work is based on a course of public lectures given at University College, London, during the sessions 1924-26. The initial object was to demonstrate to students of the College what numerous, multifarious, and indeed indispensable aids to their regular work and to their other pursuits were contained in the college library, and how they could make the fullest use of those aids. From the college library the course proceeded to the principal libraries of London, and then to the library resources of the whole country, winding up with a brief but invaluable contribution by Professor Richardson, of Prince-

ton University, summarizing library resources outside Great Britain. The ultimate aim was to give the members of the public who attended the lectures and those who read this book a guide to the chief libraries of the world, with practical information on the nature of their contents, whether general or special, and directions as to obtaining admission, borrowing privileges where these exist, hours of opening, and other details, with advice upon the best methods of using them, lists of available handbooks, bibliographical guides, and the like. Further, the volume contains some practical hints on reading, the choice of books, and the readiest ways of securing the best results from the use of any library or libraries within the reader's reach. The needs not only of the student, and of the person engaged in any kind of research, but also of the general reader, have been kept steadily in view throughout. Most of the lecturers are members of the teaching staff of the School of Librarianship; the others are librarians of various important libraries. Gratitude is due to Miss Joyce Pearson, Assistant Librarian, University College, for her valuable services in compiling the Index of this work.

E. A. B.

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I

THE USES OF LIBRARIES

II

ON THE WAY TO USE A LIBRARY, AND  
HOW TO READ

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## THE USES OF LIBRARIES

EVERYONE knows by tradition, some claim to have known in the flesh, those librarians of good old days who hated to let any hand but their own disturb the dust that rested in consecrating layers on the treasures under their charge. One thinks of them with pleasure mingled with little regret ; one would hardly wish the librarian of to-day to be anything like that. Yet there is still a grievance against librarians : the modern representative errs in the opposite direction. He is not a torpid and dignified, but an aggressive animal, avoided with impatience by all except the enlightened few as the embodiment of officious zeal ; he wants people to read too many books, he wants them to be serious, there are no limits to his absurd missionary enthusiasm. The modern librarian suffers from an absolute excess of virtue. He is a pure idealist, a wildly altruistic person, overflowing with the lust to do all the good he can to his fellow-creatures. Where he is essentially right and sane is in the knowledge that he has the power, if only they are willing, to do them immeasurable good. View him not with suspicion as a conceited being with a freak for magnifying his office. When he advertises his wares and tries to enlarge his custom, he will not profit by it in ease or a rise in salary ; his motive is not ignoble, and his success in life will be to have put all his manifold resources at the service of the toiler, the thinker, and the student—in the broadest sense, to have saved them trouble.

The commonest and most vexatious experience of modern librarians is that an enormous proportion of the general public, not excepting the more studious and intelligent, are not aware of all that libraries contain or that books contain, and, even when they have some apprehension, do not know how to get what they are in need of. Few have the knowledge and skill required to extract the very best out of any kind of library. Even scholars have been known to waste time and overlook sources of ready-made information, simply through a lofty superiority to the rules of indexing or a shaky acquaintance with that alphabetical order which is the backbone of scientific cataloguing. Thus an eminent bibliographer recently inserted in a list of works not to be found in the library of the British Museum a number of rare publications that were there all the time: he had looked for them in the wrong place, not having mastered the cataloguing rules of a library which he had been using for half a lifetime. This is not an isolated case; and one of the most familiar experiences of all who have to do with libraries is to see people, hard up for information, going away empty-handed after a protracted search for what is ready waiting, properly catalogued and indexed, and perhaps contained in ready-reference works staring them in the face on the open shelf.

A library is a machine that requires a certain amount of skill to handle, if you are to elicit the best results; the larger and more varied its contents, the more is it needful that readers should be familiar with the library arts, the uses of catalogues and indexes, the meaning of classification, and, above all, the functions and the scope of books of reference. These are the handles that set the machine working. The object of the present work is not to inveigle you into reading more, but to show you how to read more economically, perhaps with less



expenditure, and certainly with better returns. Libraries are full of labour-saving devices. Our aim is to show you how you can be spared much useless and wasteful toil. Those who really know their way about a first-class library have the secret that is most valuable to the student, researcher, or any kind of workman—that of economy of effort. Librarians, however militant, are not anxious to make people bookish; quite the reverse. Bookishness means an unintelligent addiction to reading, or a slavish reliance on memory and mechanical knowledge at the expense of freedom and practical understanding. We are pointing to something different. We would show you how to use books as tools and libraries as workshops; the object is mastery of books, not subservience to the printed word. To see life only through books would be perhaps worse than physical blindness. The object of intellectual effort is to see things as they actually are; and converse with many books and the mental vision of many authors will help to the attainment of this desirable realism.

It must not be supposed, on the other hand, that in inviting you to make more use of libraries we have the benevolent idea of saving you the expense of ever buying books for yourselves. It is a well-known fallacy that libraries are the enemies of booksellers; whereas statistics show, what common sense would have expected, that the more people use libraries the more they want to buy books. If, at the middle of last century, instead of passing an Act for the establishment of municipal libraries, Parliament had suppressed what public libraries existed, very few people to-day would be in the habit of buying books, a handful of publishers and booksellers would find it no very lucrative business to supply the requirements of the whole country, and authorship itself—which some might say was no such terrible dis-

aster—would be the last pursuit any sensible person would choose for a livelihood. It is libraries that have implanted the reading habit ; the only place where you can see all the books published and judge between them is the public library ; it is public libraries that are mainly accountable for the fact that more than ten thousand new books are produced in this country every year, and that where publishers and booksellers are legion it is so rarely that we hear of one of them going bankrupt.

There are certain books, introductory manuals and general treatises on any given subject, which the serious student of that subject cannot be without ; he must have them always by him, to mark and annotate and index in his own way to render immediate reference easy. They are his chart, his guide-book ; they show the main road he has to travel, with the private finger-posts and other memoranda marking view-points, through-routes, or turnings that lead to dead-ends. Books of this sort every reader worth his salt possesses for himself ; it would be both impracticable and undesirable to have them in the library in sufficient numbers to go round. Much the same is to be said of many other books, of a different character altogether, the great works of literature especially. These we want to have at hand to enjoy whenever we are so minded. To everyone with a tinge of culture, there are a number of books which form part, and not the least intimate part, of the very furniture of life. A library has all these things, for you cannot do without them there any more than you can dispense with them at home ; but it has further resources of a very different kind, and it is the knowledge of these far-reaching resources and the ability to use them readily that this book sets out to impart.

Consider first what a library is, and then what it is not. The term is used vaguely, often enough, for any aggre-

gation of books. People acquire books more or less at haphazard, and talk glibly about their library, when they should speak merely of their bookshelves. When, on the other hand, they have collected them, not accidentally, but with a careful and consistent eye to their tastes, their hobbies, or their chosen studies, and with the knowledge and judgment required as much in the selection of books as in the choice of a house or a wife, a wireless valve or a sparking plug, they may be entitled to call the result a library. It is not a matter of size. There are, for example, many book merchants in London with miscellaneous stocks of books numbering each perhaps scores of thousands ; these are not libraries. Roomfuls of books may be a mere accumulation, whilst a simple shelfful may constitute a library, the volumes having been selected and placed side by side to serve a definite purpose. Thus a medical man, or a lawyer, or a consulting engineer, or a public analyst, may find a mere handful of chosen works sufficient for his daily needs. By doubling the number, he would not add to the serviceability of his equipment, but probably the reverse. The library in the research department of a large industrial corporation seldom contains more than two thousand volumes ; but these are so scientifically chosen that they comprise all the works of reference wanted to answer the urgent daily questions of hundreds of engineers, mechanics, chemists, and others engaged in many departments of a complex industry. Such a special library is the aptest example of a well-organized working collection applied to a particular purpose, since in industry the law of survival of the fittest reigns supreme.

A good general library might be regarded as a grouping of such special collections, properly co-ordinated so as to strengthen and amplify each other without waste-

ful overlapping. But in most general libraries there will be no such pressing reason to apply the rigid principle of excluding all but the absolutely best. The needs to satisfy which libraries exist are too multifarious, and sometimes too incapable of precise definition, to be summed up in any rigid formula. Would it be possible to enumerate the various purposes and uses of a great select collection such as the London Library or the library of a big university or of a college embracing several faculties? National libraries, such as that of the British Museum, seem to stand by themselves, since they are designed to provide materials for every kind of scholar, to meet the needs of a countless multitude of readers, needs that are beyond computation; and they have one purpose of such heterogeneous scope, the preservation of everything published in a given country, that it sets them beyond comparison. Yet it is obvious that these, like the rest, are purposive collections; and when it is a question of spending money on foreign books the librarians assuredly know what object governs their choice.

It follows from this that, having first a clear idea of what he is going for, the reader should go straight to that kind of library that is best adapted to satisfy his wants. He will save himself and the library staff trouble by not going to the British Museum if a smaller general collection, such as that in his own public library, will probably serve; he will not go to a general library at all if he has access to a special library, historical, antiquarian, scientific, economic, technical, or what-not, which will suffice. This sounds obvious; yet it is a regular complaint that the general library is, relatively, overworked, whilst invaluable special collections are not too well-known even to the specialists for whose benefit they were founded.

First, then, a library has one purpose or several pur-

poses, acquaintance with which enables us to surmise beforehand what it contains, and to understand that we must go elsewhere for books outside its purview. Secondly, it is an organized collection, that is to say, its contents have been gathered together according to plan, and have moreover been arranged according to plan, so that readers may easily find what they are in search of, and can also see what other works are there, should they wish to pursue the subject further. The first step in acquiring the ability to use a library to the utmost profit and with the smallest expenditure of time and trouble, is to grasp the principle on which it is organized.

Now there are some libraries so vast in extent, or that have grown up so slowly and as it were grown into their shells, that there has been no chance of arranging the books on a comprehensive plan. But, as the reader in these extensive libraries is not admitted to the bookshelves, this is a circumstance that concerns not him but only the librarian. The underlying system will be exposed to view in the catalogue, which will probably have two forms, or rather there will usually be two catalogues, one alphabetical, of authors, or, in the case of anonymous books, of titles; the other, a subject catalogue. An author or alphabetical catalogue presupposes, of course, that we know the very book that we want, and can remember the author and the title. We do not always know this. Hence the peculiar value of the other species of catalogue.

This subject catalogue may be what is described as systematic, or of that other form which is called a dictionary catalogue. In the systematic catalogue, the entries of books are arranged on the plan of a logical classification of knowledge, so far as this can be applied to such entities as books, some of which are much too

nondescript for strict classification. If you are seeking a work on Algebra, you will look for it in the main class Science, and within the division Mathematics. If you want a study of Tariff Reform, you will turn to Sociology, main division Political Economy, subdivision Protection and Free Trade. This is clearly a scientific method of arrangement, and it has the advantage of grouping works on allied subjects in close proximity, so as to help in drawing up schemes for further reading or research, or in referring quickly to other books for the explanation or illustration of specific points.

A dictionary catalogue is like a gazetteer ; but a large library well laid out on a systematic plan is more like an atlas. Just as a map shows the lie of the land, the relative situation of regions and places, so a bird's-eye view in a classified library enables the inquirer to seize the relations and connexions of a subject or subjects, in a visual way that serves much more than his immediate wants. For the bump of locality must be developed in every kind of study, or we shall not only waste effort in making for our destination but also miss the habit of exercising that most valuable faculty, the judgment. Not merely does this ability to know our whereabouts help us to find short cuts ; it further enables us to establish more numerous and firmer links of association, and of rational rather than accidental association.

The dictionary catalogue is not arranged in this systematic way, and does not lead so directly from one topic to those which are logically its neighbours. But it has certain conveniences, especially for those who want information on some well-defined subject ; readers in quest of more than this must carry their map of the field of knowledge in their own heads. In this form of catalogue the subject-headings are simply set forth in the order of the alphabet. Thus you will find Mathematics

followed by Mechanics, Medicine, and Mendelism, and these by Mensuration and Metaphysics—topics with nothing in common except that their names begin with the same letter. If you want Algebra, you will not look under Science, but under A ; and Tariff Reform will be sought, not under Sociology or Political Economy, but under T, or else as a subsection of Protection and Free Trade.

All frequenters of libraries ought to be familiar with these two main types of subject catalogue, and with the devices employed to make up for unavoidable deficiencies in either. Thus a dictionary catalogue will not bring out the existence of groups of books giving subsidiary information, unless these be indicated by means of cross-reference ; for instance, from Tariff Reform to Protection, Duties on Special Articles, Subsidies, Reciprocity, and so on. Even the systematic catalogue will avail itself of cross-references to show the reader where he may find light shed on his subject in books dealing with alien subjects. In many large libraries in which the main catalogue is one of authors, there are subject-indexes to these on a plan very near to that of the dictionary catalogue. Noteworthy examples are the subject-indexes or subject-catalogues of the British Museum and of the London Library, in which the subject-headings are arranged alphabetically, except that there is a certain amount of grouping, under countries or nationalities, for instance.

Every reader is aware of the immense advantage, when he is in search of information or merely looking for something to read, of being able to pick up and compare a number of books. When the library itself can be explored, provided that it be systematically arranged, the reader is independent of catalogues ; although he must not forget that even so a page of a catalogue is a map on

a convenient scale and may still be useful to the pedestrian. For the purpose of allowing readers this privilege, and with the gratifying result of educating them in the use of libraries and training them in the art of judging the points of a book, a very large proportion of the medium-sized libraries in Britain and America have been thoroughly rearranged, and the books classified on a logical system that the reader can grasp. Thus the books on the shelves correspond in position to the titles in the catalogue, if this is a subject catalogue of the systematic type. The system adopted in the majority of libraries is the Dewey decimal classification, which may or may not be superior to some other systems, but has two conspicuous virtues : it is expansible to any extent, division being possible to any number of places after the decimal point, thus being adaptable to the simplest or the most complex division and subdivision ; and the decimal numbers are easy to remember, and tend after much use to become as familiar as the number of your house in the street. Most public libraries now offer readers this open access, in both the lending and the reference departments. In the British Museum, the open shelves afford us direct access to some 30,000 volumes. Some colleges grant the same convenience to students in the seminar libraries. The London Library permits its members to thread the mazes of the great book-stack, and thus review perhaps the largest mass of printed books classified and arranged for public inspection to be found in any library in the world.

Some large libraries are arranged on a slightly different principle, of which that of University College, London, may be taken as an illustration. This is not a general library in the usual sense, classified and arranged on a logical system, but a large group of faculty and departmental collections, that is to say, a grouping of special



libraries. Now in a special library it may be well for the sake of maximum utility to refrain from being excessively logical. A library of economics naturally has on its shelves works on psychology and other subjects; a library attached to a school of architecture may appropriately house works on history, literature, and the like; a library for students of English literature contains books on history, biography, æsthetics, and various other subjects: in short, a well-equipped special library saves you the trouble of following up cross-references by putting illustrative works on the same or adjoining shelves.

But suppose that you are in a large library having only an author catalogue. It is evident that you must know beforehand what book you require, its author and its title. We shall come in a few moments to the question how you are to arrive at the satisfactory state of knowing exactly what you want. But, on the assumption that you do know, there is still the problem how to find it. We are all of us, no doubt, firmly convinced that we know that classic basis of all erudition, the alphabet, both forwards and backwards, and that in using it as a guide for putting things in order or finding things we cannot go wrong. But do not be too sure; the pitfalls that you come across in the orderly arrangement of words by the first few letters are innumerable. Is one to look for De Quincey or De Morgan under the first capital letter or the second? They are both properly catalogued under the De. But there is a different rule for De Musset and De Maupassant, foreign names of this type not appearing under the preposition. La Rochefoucauld and Du Chaillu, however, are catalogued under the first particle, because the definite article is included in this. Compound names, such as Baring-Gould, Leveson-Gower, Holman-Hunt, or Roberts-Austen, often cause trouble;

according to the usage endorsed by the *Cataloguing Rules*,<sup>1</sup> they will be found under the first name. Where will you look for Fanny Burney—under Burney or D'Arblay; and, if the latter, under A or D? The *Encyclopædia Britannica* puts her under D'Arblay, which being a foreign name ought properly to be put under A, not D. Thus one may well look three times before discovering that there is an article on this writer. Then pseudonyms are extraordinarily puzzling. Some highly scientific indexes make it a strict rule to place pseudonymous people under the real name, which is often by no means well-known. Yet few are so punctilious as to catalogue Voltaire under Arouet or Anatole France under Thibault. George Eliot is another case of the same kind; she sometimes appears under her maiden name Evans, hardly ever under her married name Cross, and in fact most cataloguers make her also a special case and put her under the familiar *nom de guerre*. Authors who have been ennobled offer difficulty. Are we to look for Disraeli or Beaconsfield, Thomson or Kelvin, Walpole or Orford, Lubbock or Avebury? Cataloguers do not all agree. Some adopt the family name, some the latest of the person's titles. Then, which part of the long names in Spanish, Miguel Cervantes de Saavedra, Lope Felix de Vega Carpio, etc., is the key-word? A correct ruling gives us such entries as these: QUEVEDO Y VILLEGAS, Francisco Gomez de; ORTUÑEZ DE CALAHORRA, Diego; PARDO BAZÁN, Emilia (Señora Quiroga); yet the British Museum puts the first of these names under Gomez de Quevedo y Villegas, Francisco.

Oriental names are the most bewildering of all, and no one but an expert can handle them in a catalogue or

<sup>1</sup> *Cataloguing Rules*. English edition. London, Library Association, 1908. The British Museum and Cutter's cataloguing rules differ: the Bodleian follows the first rule.

index without a slip. But Government publications and those of collective authorship in general are also difficult to catalogue, and hard to find until one has mastered a series of special rules. Every library used to lay down its own set of rules, which might or might not agree in the main with those of other libraries and very rarely coincided altogether with any. Some years ago, a code of cataloguing rules was agreed upon by the Library Associations of Britain and America, the size of the volume in which they are set out<sup>1</sup> being in itself abundant evidence of the innumerable difficulties involved; but even this is not accepted by the British Museum and many other important libraries, and it is apparently unknown to the majority of index-makers. Users of libraries should refer to this in all cases of difficulty.

Then there is the order of arrangement when the right form of entry is known. Will you expect to find De Quincey between Depping and Derby or in front of Deacon, the De being a complete word? Some indexers prefer the first way, some the second; and the alternative brings a large number of proper names and other words into uncertainty, both for the indexer and the consulter of indexes. A numerical order is strict and unequivocal; the alphabet proves to be a dubious guide. When it is remembered that we are confronted with the problem in every dictionary, encyclopædia, and almost every work of reference from the *Dictionary of National Biography* to *Bradshaw*, it is obviously a matter of some consequence. The eminent bibliographer already mentioned went astray through misunderstanding the British Museum rules for entering the titles of anonymous works.

Manifestly, users of libraries and of reference works should not only be conversant with the authoritative rules for indexing names and book-titles and for arrang-

<sup>1</sup> See p. 14.

ing in alphabetical series; they should also be aware that there is no rule accepted by all and that some follow this ordinance and some the other, and hence they must notice which alternative is adopted in every catalogue or index they consult. In the catalogue of a very large library, like that of the British Museum, misunderstanding as to the exact place where an author's name is to be expected may cause very considerable trouble; in the use of any work of reference having an alphabetical key, it may easily mislead one into thinking that the work does not contain an article or other matter on the subject in question. And even when the author is found, if there are pages on pages of the titles of his works, it is well to know on what principle these are arranged, chronologically or alphabetically; else, again, an item may easily be missed. Make sure, therefore, that you know all about the rules adopted in these matters, before giving up any quest. Never omit to read any explanatory preface to a big catalogue or even to an index; the compilers would never take the trouble to put it there unless it were indispensable.

Let us now suppose that the library to be consulted is a closed library; in other words, that the public are not admitted to the bookshelves; also that the only catalogue is an author catalogue. This answers only one direct question, whether a given book by a given author is in the library or not. To make up your mind what book or books will probably serve your purpose, you will have to resort to other means of guidance. Such assistance is afforded by two sorts of books: the bibliography, which is a more or less exhaustive list of the works dealing with a subject or subjects, or of the works by or about a person or persons, or the works produced by a certain press, body of persons, town, nation, and so on; and the regular guide-book to books. The latter may be of

divers kinds, adapted to readers of various needs and capacities. It is selective in principle, its purpose being to direct the reader to the best books for his particular purpose, that is, the most suitable books for him at any given stage in a course of reading or research.

No subject, nowadays, however out of the ordinary or however unimportant, is unprovided with a bibliography. A good bibliography of bibliography or list of extant bibliographies is a large work, running, perhaps, into several volumes. A respectable stock of these guides, comprising both general bibliographies and those of specific subjects, is the very foundation-stone of a modern library; they are the librarian's best-used tools. One of the first that the student should know, the *New Guide to Reference Books*, by I. G. Mudge, gives selections of bibliographies followed by lists of reference works on every subject, the best compendiums, dictionaries, encyclopædias, year-books, indexes, etc. The handiest bibliography of bibliography for general purposes is W. P. Courtney's *Register of National Bibliography*, which is a dictionary catalogue of bibliographies of all subjects. The title is rather a misnomer, the word "National" apparently meaning that preference is given to lists found in English books or periodicals, though a good selection of bibliographies in foreign languages is included. The word "National" is more appropriate to the *English Catalogue*, the *Annual American Catalogue*, Lorenz's *Catalogue général de la librairie française*, and other periodical registers of the literary output of any country; R. A. Peddie's *National Bibliographies* gives a list of these latter, which are chiefly wanted by the librarian and the bibliographer. No student or worker in any subject whatever should flatter himself that he has a grip of that subject until he is acquainted with its bibliography. He will find Courtney invaluable.

But until he has reached an advanced stage he will discover bibliographical information enough in the second kind of aid, the guide-book to books. Of these, also, there are a small number of general guides and a large number of guides to particular subjects; and some are small and highly selective, others large and almost as comprehensive as a bibliography. The best-known comprehensive guide is William Swan Sonnenschein's *Best Books*, which describes itself as "a contribution towards systematic bibliography"; the four volumes of the last edition (of which only three have appeared as yet) will probably include well over 150,000 titles. As is necessary in a guide-book to books, these are classified systematically, and subdivided to a fairly minute extent, so that the reader can see what are the books recommended on even minor aspects of his subject, and can easily draw up a list either for a short course of reading or for the most thoroughgoing study of any subject. Descriptive notes are appended to titles of individual books when the title is not sufficiently informative, and there are other indications enabling the reader to make sure that he finds the most suitable book for his purpose. Another guide of a similar kind, but less comprehensive, as it includes only one-tenth as many books, is Nelson's *Standard Books*; in certain subjects, for instance, fine art and literature, this is useful to the book-selector by reason of the full descriptive notes, though it is getting out of date. Some admirable guides, setting forth graduated courses of reading, came out thirty-five years ago, when University Extension was in full swing; the National Home-Reading Union caters for the same class of reader now with its courses for reading-circles. The public must be cautioned against various pretended guides and bibliographies that in reality emanate from firms of publishers, and are intended to make books sell rather than to give

the reader sound advice. Some of these are elaborately disguised.

Certain library catalogues afford invaluable guidance to readers outside the libraries to which they pertain. The British Museum catalogue is a general bibliography of colossal dimensions, though not exhaustive on any subject, if reasonably so on many. The subject-indexes thereto, which appear in bulky volumes every five years, give a conspectus of the literature of specific subjects, being incomplete, however, on works published abroad. But the British Museum is not a select library; it has to receive and catalogue everything that comes to hand; hence a far more useful guide is the catalogue of a library in which every precaution is taken that only the very best is acquired in every field of study. This is what makes so valuable the catalogue of the London Library, the largest and finest select library in Britain. Its stock of books has been brought together by a succession of librarians and committees who have all been scholars and chosen for their knowledge of the literature of many subjects. The best opinions have been consulted and no pains have been spared in choosing books for purchase. The standard of selection is high, because the library exists for the service of highly educated people. It follows that those using the admirable subject-indexes to the London Library catalogue must not expect to find elementary text-books mentioned; but probably no book is too advanced or too special, if it be of interest to scholars. The London Library, however, has comparatively little on applied science or technology. To make up for this deficiency, the inquirer may be directed to the catalogues of H.M. Patent Office Library, the Science Museum Library, the John Crerar Library at Chicago, and some others.

Passing from general to special guides, we find that these are to be numbered by legions, the last-mentioned group of subjects, science and technology, being exceedingly well covered, as a glance at any recent bibliography of bibliography will show. Look at the division "Special Subjects" in the *New Guide to Reference Books*, and you will see a subsection "Bibliography" for nearly every section; and, further, any important dictionary or treatise in the list is sure to contain bibliographies or courses of reading. Thus, under the heading "Social Sciences" are cited, first the huge German *Bibliographie der Sozialwissenschaften*, which is the mainstay of advanced students, then an elementary guide to reading published by Harvard University, and the numerous select lists issued by the Library of Congress. In history, we are referred to C. K. Adams's *Manual of Historical Literature*, a standard guide now badly in need of revision, to Paul Herre's *Quellenkunde zur Weltgeschichte*, to the useful little *Helps for Students of History*, and several other general guides, to be followed in later sections by some of more special scope. In Mudge's directory to works of reference are tabulated the most useful bibliographies of universal and national literatures, together with a section on the choice of books. Only the inexperienced need be cautioned against a foible of this and other American books of a like kind, the prominence given to American subjects and the undue preference for American books. This must, however, not diminish our gratitude to the United States for much excellent pioneer work in this important field.

Happily, the extreme importance of bibliographical information is now so fully acknowledged, that it is rare indeed for the author of a serious contribution to learning not to feel obliged to append either a full list of authoritative works on his subject or at least a reading-



list. One of the most prominent uses of an encyclopædia is to purvey this sort of information. An article on any subject of importance is regularly followed by a list of the chief authorities, and perhaps by suggestions for an introductory course of reading. Compendiums such as dictionaries of science, music, architecture, etc., supply more thorough bibliographies. Thus J. M. Baldwin's *Dictionary of Philosophy and Psychology* comprises a third volume devoted to the bibliography of the subject, the best in existence; it is so well-esteemed that this part has been published in a separate edition. The Cambridge histories, dealing in three long sets of volumes with ancient, mediæval, and modern history, and in two others with English and American literature, contain ample bibliographies. The historical student will find here all he wants until he is mature enough to undertake research on his own account, when he will easily find his way to whole libraries of historical bibliography. The young student of literature will be content at first with such courses of reading as are laid down for him in Chambers's *Cyclopædia of English Literature* or in the ordinary manuals. As he specializes, he will find direction in the lists of books following the articles on literary subjects in the *Encyclopædia Britannica* or at the end of the monographs in such a series as *The Great Writers*. Lastly, he will be able to survey the bulk of the material required for the exhaustive study of an author or a period in the comprehensive list at the end of each volume in the Cambridge histories of English and of American literature. Some guides to reading are readable themselves, and not mere tabulations for reference. Foremost among such must be placed that admirable manual by Dr. G. P. Gooch, *History and Historians of the Nineteenth Century*. A different kind of book by the same author, *Annals of Politics and Culture*, may also be here

commended to the attention of historical students ; it sets out, in graphic juxtaposition, the chief events in political history and the history of culture, from the close of the Middle Ages to the present day, and gives advice on reading in addition.

But the reader and student, especially when they have read widely in the standard works on their respective subjects, will want to peruse the results of the latest research, and here, where guidance amidst the innumerable books, pamphlets, and articles incessantly pouring from the press is most urgently needed, trustworthy advice is hardest to obtain. All libraries of standing take in a selection of periodicals, including the transactions of the learned societies. Heedful students will naturally try to keep abreast of modern scholarship by scrutinizing these as they appear, and constantly referring to back numbers. Here, among other things, they will find reviews of new books, which they will read with a judicial eye, and make notes of such works as seem, after a comparison of several reviews, to merit attention. In general, it may be said that reviews of scientific and technical books are more to be relied on than the criticism of literature. Tastes in æsthetic matters differ ; but it is not so difficult to find out whether a new work is sound in its facts, and whether it makes a definite contribution to knowledge. A select list of the most reliable reviews will be found at the end of the book. To understand the need of caution in forming opinions on the relative value of books from the reviews, readers are recommended to consider several chapters on the subject in the late Professor Churton Collins's *Ephemera Critica* (1902). But the periodicals contain a mass of other material, accounts of new discoveries or new theories, criticisms of older authorities, controversial articles, and much else that the specialist dare not ignore. In making

use of this material, the reader will be thrown upon his own resources. If he cannot trust his own judgment, he had better wait until he has seen comments on such contributions in one of the authoritative reviews, or until he finds which articles have been singled out by the *Subject-Index to Periodicals*. This excellent guide to periodical literature, which had been preceded by others, others that are still of use as indexes to the periodicals of former years, deals with five or six hundred periodicals, and thus puts at our disposal a wealth of material accumulated by contemporary research. For, of course, the user of a good library will soon find that it is not only the periodicals on the table that he requires, but also, and in a degree of importance that increases with the increase of his knowledge, the files of periodicals on the shelves. To these, a store which the expert worker may value higher even than the books, the *Subject-Index* is a key. The best-managed libraries keep ahead of this, and in fact put their readers into touch with periodical literature as it comes out, by indexing it themselves, and by filing cuttings and other fugitive matter for instant reference. The average reader has a great deal to learn before he can regard himself as fully conversant with the multifarious aids put at his service by the modern librarian.



## II

### ON THE WAY TO USE A LIBRARY, AND HOW TO READ

A LIBRARY that is not a mere working collection of books for quick reference contains roughly two kinds of books, those we go to for information wanted at a given moment, and those we want to read. It is on the former class that I have laid stress as pre-eminently the time-savers and the savers of labour. Only an experienced librarian is familiar with all the ready-reference books, compiled with incredible toil for the rapid purveyance of the many kinds of information that can be tabulated for the benefit of mankind. If there is any benefactor of the species that deserves a monument for performing services of more than national importance, it is the maker of a first-rate book of reference. Dr. Johnson defined a lexicographer as a harmless drudge. Surely Mr. Whitaker, Liddell and Scott, Sir Leslie Stephen, Cruden, Mrs. Cowden Clarke, and Bartlett, and the successive editors of the *Dictionary of National Biography* and the *Encyclopædia Britannica* deserve an illustrious place in our calendar of heroes.<sup>1</sup>

But do we avail ourselves of the fruit of their indefatigable labours in a way that is worthy of our debt? I would exhort all students and intelligent readers to make more use of reference books. It will not be time lost, but time saved, to make sure that you know the

<sup>1</sup> Samuel Butler wrote, "I keep my books at the British Museum and at Mudie's. *Webster's Dictionary*, *Whitaker's Almanack*, and *Bradshaw's Railway Guide* should be sufficient for any ordinary library."

precise meaning of every word that you meet with in your reading or employ in writing and speaking ; that you are not content with a hazy idea of the whereabouts and relative importance of the places, the identity and literary or historical importance of the persons, or the nature and meaning of things, ideas, or events to which you come across allusions. When you have found out exactly what it is you have read about, when you have seen it illustrated by facts or pictures or a lucid account of it, the person, the event, the thing, the scientific or philosophic or literary idea becomes, not a line of print in a book, but a vivid reality. You now have an interest in it ; you know how it has interested other minds ; you have made it a part of your mental experience. The word *inform*, whence this word *information*, means to impress the form or idea of something on the mind. We use the word *information* oftenest of facts or intelligence required for some urgent object, to solve a difficulty or enable us to do something. The experience of librarians is that the best-used reference libraries or libraries of information are those concerned with technical occupations and business. My plea is rather for the habitual use of standard sources of information for a much wider range of purposes. Let us review some of these, for even the best-known are by no means used to the extent they should be ; the variety of their information is far from being adequately appreciated.

Dictionaries are of many kinds and serve many different purposes ; most dictionaries tell us much more than the average inquirer is accustomed to ask of them. Apart from the matter which is their chief and obvious business, most popular dictionaries, in particular, contain tables of miscellaneous information that are not utilized as they should be. (1) The first duty of a dictionary of language is to give definitions, or accounts of the

meaning of words, along with examples of words that are nearly synonymous. Most words are used in more senses than one; these, at any rate the chief of them, are explained. (2) Some, for instance the great *Oxford Dictionary*, and its forerunner Richardson's *English Dictionary*, give a series of quotations, illustrating the meaning or meanings, and bringing out the varied shades of meaning, especially in former uses of any given word. Thus we are offered a little monograph on the word and a summary of its history which are invaluable to students of both language and literature. (3) Most dictionaries of the vernacular are etymological, that is, they give a succinct account of the derivation of words. The *Oxford Dictionary* is the principal authority for English; Skeat's *Etymological Dictionary* concentrates on this side of lexicography exclusively. If you are puzzled to account for the existence or the particular meaning of a word; if, for instance, you want to make out why there are two totally different words in the English language spelt *prize*, as well as a third sounded like these but spelt *prise*; look it up at once or make a note of it for early consultation of the dictionary. If you are in doubt about an idiom or a colloquialism or a piece of literary slang, such as "joining your flats"; or if you are wondering whether you dare use in a piece of grave writing or academic conversation such a phrase as "cottoning to," in the sense of being friendly with or favourable towards somebody or something, look it up in the *Oxford Dictionary*, and you will find the usage has classical authority and you need not be nervous about criticism. In truth, dictionaries may be very readable books, once a person has realized their charm, as there are notable examples to witness; and few books are so instructive. Matthew Arnold, so Professor Saintsbury avouches, used to prepare for verse composition by hunting through

Richardson for striking words, and Théophile Gautier did the same in French. A book of the same kind, which is primarily for reference but may be read with delight, is H. W. Fowler's *Dictionary of Modern English Usage*. It deals with the puzzles, the disputed points, etc. (4) Definitions, etymologies, and pronunciations are all given in most dictionaries; the big *Oxford Dictionary* is of course the fullest in all three particulars, whilst its offspring, the *Concise Oxford Dictionary*, is a marvel of condensation summarizing these and putting variant usages in the smallest possible compass. There is only one English dictionary exclusively devoted to pronunciation, that of Daniel Jones, professor of phonetics in the University of London, who based his work on an inductive study of actual pronunciation by different classes of people in different parts of England. (5) Dictionaries of foreign languages usually give the English equivalents of words rather than definitions, and they usually omit etymologies. Pronunciation they always attempt to give, with variable success. The wise student will use a dictionary in the language itself as soon as he can, rather than a French-English, German-English, or Italian-English, as the case may be. He will prefer to do so on the same principle as he prefers never to use a crib.

(6) Much miscellaneous information is usually to be found in dictionaries, but is often overlooked because people do not examine the books they use or make sure that they know how many different jobs the authors undertake to perform. Introductory matter, including prefaces, tables of contents, explanatory notes, and the like are carelessly assumed to be put there as a matter of form. Yet even the title-page is something more than a preliminary obeisance, and should be read, with all the rest of the pages preceding the main text, before



we conclude that we know what any book is, what it professes to do, and how it proposes to do this. The advice applies to every book we read. One of the commonest items of such miscellaneous information is a list of names of persons and places, with the pronunciations. Encyclopædic dictionaries, such as the *Standard*, usually incorporate this with the main list of words ; and yet they find room for other extensive lists at the end. Another common item is a glossary of foreign words and phrases, which may even serve as an index to the more familiar quotations. Dates of notable events, statistics, monetary information, tables of weights and measures, lists of abbreviations, signs, symbols, etc., are often included. If you possess a dictionary, make sure that you have been put up to all the wrinkles it can give you.

There is a special kind of dictionary that supplies much more than definitions. This is the encyclopædic dictionary, such as Funk and Wagnall's *Standard Dictionary* or the *Century Dictionary and Cyclopædia* or the *New International Webster* or Larousse. All these are reference works of many and varied uses. They give a much fuller account than the usual definitions and explanations of words, often quoting from historical, scientific, technical, and other authorities, often illustrating objects with sketches or diagrams, and helping the inquirer with lists of synonyms, antonyms, cross-references to allied topics, and other important details. Thus the information supplied is far from being purely linguistic ; in fact, a large work of this kind usually gives many thousands of personal and geographical names, and serves the purposes of a gazetteer, a concise dictionary of biography, and a dictionary of dates. This, of course, is an attempt to combine the ordinary dictionary and the encyclopædia, and many will find such a compendium to be all they

want for home use and thus spare themselves the expense of a regular encyclopædia.

An encyclopædia is a collection of descriptive, expository, historical, and critical articles on all kinds of subjects, usually arranged in alphabetical order. The name implies universal, all-round information, although it is sometimes applied to alphabetical treatises on a single branch of learning. Usually, however, the name dictionary is preferred for the latter. Both kinds include many works of superlative value to those in pursuit of knowledge; and to be able to use the immense resources of such works effectively, for elucidating, extending, and correlating our facts and our ideas, is to enjoy a definite advantage over those who may actually know more than we do but are less skilled in handling and applying knowledge. For merely knowing, in the sense of carrying in the memory, is a poor accomplishment, unless our knowledge is unified and systematized, worked, as it were, into the very fabric of our minds. The continual and intelligent use of encyclopædias and other comprehensive works exercises a mental faculty to which memory is but a servant, and at the same time trains the memory to be an obedient and efficient servant, with no dangerous pretensions to a more exalted place in the mental economy.

Setting aside for the time being the narrower kind of encyclopædia, of geography, literature, economics, natural history, or other branch of learning, let us consider the true encyclopædia on the grand scale, the universal inquire-within. The best-known is the *Encyclopædia Britannica*. This is the best of those which organize their material under large rather than small headings. Under Philosophy, Logic, Psychology, Europe, England, France, Art, Painting, Evolution, and similar themes appear long and systematic monographs, rather than mere articles; any of these may often be equal in volume

to a good-sized book. The absence of minor and more specific headings necessitates an index, which actually takes up a whole volume, and should be searched for information on the narrower topics and for any further facts that may be vouchsafed on the subjects treated in the main articles. This index volume makes the *Britannica* an incomparably useful means of obtaining recent information on almost any conceivable point. There is also a volume of maps, which will save many owners of the work the expense of an atlas.

There are other encyclopædias which subdivide their subjects, instead of dealing with them under large headings; these often cover the ground so completely with their major and minor headings that, with the help of cross-references, they can safely dispense with an index. Among the best encyclopædias of moderate compass arranged on this plan are Chambers's and Harmsworth's; they are capital books of reference for home use. As already mentioned, any encyclopædia worthy of the name is equipped with select bibliographies or reading-lists on the main subjects, and thus forms of itself a serviceable guide-book to books.

Another class of reference work is typified by the dictionary of quotations. There are many of them, some good, some grievously defective. Most of those, but not all, which deal principally with English have also minor sections for Latin, French, and perhaps other foreign quotations; but there are also special compendiums of foreign quotations which are more comprehensive within their own sphere. The usual method of arrangement is to classify the passages quoted under appropriate topics, such as Memory, Mercy, Mermaids, and so forth; but an index is also, as a rule, provided, in which catch-words are set out alphabetically, forming a sort of concordance. The concordance proper is an alphabetical

list of the words in a book or in an author's whole work, accompanied by enough of the context to enable the reader to recognize the passage sought; and the place where this is to be found is indicated by a reference to the book, chapter, verse, or line. A concordance of ancient standing is Cruden's *Concordance to the Bible*, now superseded by Strong's *Exhaustive Concordance*. Since the Bible is divided into books and numbered chapters, and these again into numbered verses, reference is easy. But if we want to trace a passage through a concordance to Shakespeare, Milton, Burns, Tennyson, or other author, we must make sure that we refer to an edition of the author in which the lines or verses are numbered, and numbered as in the edition used by the maker of the concordance. There are also dictionaries of mottoes, proverbs, maxims, epigrams, and the like; though many of the larger dictionaries of quotations do not neglect these. Many people are wise enough to make their own collections of sayings and passages that have for them a strong personal appeal; yet even they will hardly be able to do without the more systematic dictionaries of this kind.

Besides these dictionaries of a literary nature, there are some special ones that supplement the ordinary dictionaries of languages. They deal with such things as abbreviations, disputed spellings, irregular plurals, the proper way to divide a word at the end of a line, the use of hyphens, capital letters, italics, printer's signs, and such-like. An admirable desk-book of this kind is the *Authors' and Printers' Dictionary* by F. Howard Collins, which is described as a "Guide for authors, editors, printers, correctors of the press, compositors, and typists." In a remarkably complete and compendious manner, it codifies the best typographical practice of the present day, in regard to words of doubtful spelling, when capitals

should be used, and similar worrying questions. Then there are dictionaries of synonyms and of antonyms, that is, of words that have a closely similar significance to that of the words indexed, and of words that mean the exact contrary. A favourite work akin to these, though not a regular dictionary of the subject, is the *Thesaurus of English Words and Phrases*, by Peter Mark Roget. This was compiled as a help to writers. Under such terms as Odour, Inodorousness, Sound, Silence, Loudness, Faintness, are given a series of nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs, expressing these ideas; these terms are regularly classified under large heads, such as Abstract Relations, Space, Matter, Intellect, with a semi-scientific subdivision; and there is, further, an index giving the user a great deal of assistance in finding the word that will convey his idea with the utmost precision, or simply helping him to diversify his language. Some people swear by Roget's *Thesaurus*; others will have nothing to do with what they think savours of literary charlatanry.

There are yet other reference works of miscellaneous sorts to be enumerated, and a good many others that must be left for the studious and persistent reader to discover now that he has been put upon the right track. There are dictionaries of fictitious names, of pseudonymous and anonymous literature. The compendiums published by newspapers and other agencies, and entitled year-books, annuals, almanacks, and so on, are packed with the most practical sorts of information. Everybody knows what a directory is; few realize the large amount or the variety of the information it nearly always contains. Directories that are out of date have an historical value, increasing in direct ratio to their obsolescence; students of local history have occasion to appreciate the value of an old file of directories. Wideawake librarians keep files of such biblia-abiblia, to use Charles

Lamb's phrase, as *Whitaker's Almanack*, *Who's Who*, and many other annuals that are commonly thrown away. A recent publication, *Who Was Who?* makes a handy complement to the current *Who's Who?*; it is the fullest record we have of eminent English people who died between 1897 and 1916. Whitaker and several other of the year-books referred to contain quantities of the more useful statistics. But the richest compendium of statistical information is unquestionably the *Statesman's Year-Book*, a storehouse of geographical, political, commercial, and social facts about every country in the world. The special investigator and those engaged in municipal or parliamentary politics will find this work invaluable; but they will probably want to seek further information at the fountain-head, and will have recourse to Blue Books and other Government publications, a list of which is published by H.M. Stationery Office. Such inquirers and many others will also find satisfaction for other requirements in that compact summary of current history, the *Annual Register*, of which every good reference library ought to have a complete set, for each successive year from 1758 to the present.

For a general list of works of reference, the reader must examine the pages of Mudge, but a few others of peculiar value may still be mentioned, as indicating the many lines of study and inquiry in which scholars have put masses of data, gathered from innumerable sources, at the immediate service of readers. Students of Greek and Latin literature, history, art, archæology, and all other branches of ancient life and thought, will find an enormous amount of the most important information, including results of the latest research, in Leonard Whibley's *Companion to Greek Studies* and Sir John Sandys's *Companion to Latin Studies*. These books are put together in a methodical and thoroughgoing way,

with systematic reference to ancient and modern authorities, tables of dates and important facts, maps and illustrations that really do illustrate, concise bibliographies, and an adequate series of indexes. They are a miracle of condensation and of ready serviceability ; and, if any one wishes to pursue a line of study or original research in any direction, they give him a good start on the road he will have to travel. Sir William Smith's *Dictionary of Greek and Roman Antiquities* and *Dictionary of Greek and Roman Biography and Mythology*, like the companion dictionaries of the Bible and of Christian antiquities and other subjects, are very useful as classical encyclopædias, especially with those of Whibley and Sandys to supplement them with their later scholarship.

Historical students are exceptionally well off in books of reference, especially bibliographies and bibliographical guides. But there are all sorts of tools in the historical workshop : atlases, gazetteers, chronological tables, especially those setting forth political, social, intellectual, and æsthetic facts in parallel order, or mapping out contemporaneous events in different countries on a uniform plan. An old-fashioned book that summarizes universal history in compact chronological sections dealing with all the chief countries of the world at any epoch, is Carl Ploetz's *Epitome of History, ancient, mediæval, and modern*. It is handy both for general guidance and as a means of quick reference. Gooch's *Annals of Politics and Culture* has already been mentioned, and there are several other excellent examples of chronological outlines. Nothing is more important to the historical student than to have a firm grasp of the relative chronology of events, whether the significance is political and social or intellectual and moral. To study causation, we must first have a precise knowledge of the sequence or the simultaneousness of phenomena. Many false

inferences would have been avoided had there been a time map available of the facts reviewed; it is very easy, and may be disastrous, to be hazy in the matter of dates.

But the other sort of map is not less indispensable. The movements of peoples, the position of cities in relation to physical features, military and naval events, changes of frontiers, and other geographical facts must be visualized before they can be properly understood. Hence, in addition to the best modern atlases there must be collections of historical maps for all the chief periods; and, fortunately, a number are available. Most atlases are provided with indexes of places, and reference from the place-name to the map square in which it is situated offers little difficulty. A good dodge, employed by the *Times Atlas*, is to have a sheet of transparent cloth, ruled in numbered squares, which can be laid over the map; the squares are in this case numbered consecutively, in correspondence with the index, instead of the more usual method of letters for latitude and numerals for longitude, or scientific location by degrees. Never be content to read about a place without actually seeing its situation on the map; and make sure that you know what the colouring or shading, the cross-hatching or contour-lines, the capitals or small letters or italics, and all the other marks respectively signify. For other aids in this department, guides to collections of state papers and others documents, collections of prints and other illustrative matter, indexes of portraits, and the like, all that can be done here is to assure the reader that such things exist, and refer him to the appropriate guide-books for more specific direction.

Most people have some inkling of the uses of an encyclopædia, even though it would be too much to say that most people know how to use one to real purpose; but there is an admirable means of obtaining information



readily which is not utilized much except by the expert ; this is by the use of indexes, the indexes provided in all kinds of learned books. It is unfortunately true that many works containing most valuable contributions to knowledge have been published without indexes or with very poor ones ; which is a serious disadvantage to every reader, and renders them almost useless to those who are not reading the books through but wish to consult them for immediate information. We are coming to regard the omission of an index in a learned work as little short of a criminal offence ; though indexes are not yet all they should be, and one could protest at large against the perfunctory indexing of many erudite works published of late years, especially in Britain. The book that is efficiently indexed will be used far oftener than even better books lacking this key to their resources. And there is this superiority in a work of the kind indicated over the article in an encyclopædia, that it is the independent statement of his views or researches by a person whose status and authority are known ; you are drawing, in a sense, from an original source.

Indexing, to be effective, should be analytical ; that is, it should not merely give a list of the pages where a subject is mentioned, but should point out the substance of each mention. Examples of the two kinds, from opposite pages of the same volume,<sup>1</sup> will show the difference between them, in form and utility. Take the analytical entry first:—

PETERBOROUGH, Earl of (Charles Mordaunt), 85, 86 ; in joint command with Shovell, 86 and n. 1 ; at Montjuich, 87 ; and Leake, 88 ; at Valencia, 89, 92, 110 ; recalled to England, 129 ; the *New Atlantis* and, 152 ; the tories and, 167, 179 ; and the Catalans, 214 ; turns Jacobite, 245.

Compare this epitome of the career of Peterborough,

<sup>1</sup> *Political History of England, 1702-1760*, index pp. 546-7.

so far as it is germane to the section of British history that is the subject of the book, with the following bare list of the pages where the other man's name occurs. The one tells us what we are to look for ; the other obliges us to hunt through thirteen entries for the fact we are in search of.

PRIOR, Matthew, poet and diplomatist, 124, 177, 182, 186, 187, 191, 204, 225, 234, 235, 240, 289, 485.

Many books proudly asserting that they possess an index have only an index of this latter kind. Some tell you which are the chief pages dealing with the subject by means of italics or some other difference in type ; but entries of this sort cannot compare with the fulness of an analytical index. The reader will soon learn to know and value books having analytical indexes, and will count them among the most useful of all works of reference. An analytical index is a tabulation of questions and answers, of clues or key-words. Each word in the alphabetical list is one term in an equation, and by it you discover the unknown quantity you are in quest of. Take another example, illustrating the useful summaries of knowledge and of recent discovery that may be compressed into an index, as well as the various sorts of question that are answered. The following is from the index to Sir Arthur Keith's *Antiquity of Man* :—

EOANTHROPUS, brain of, 336 ; brain-capacity of, 390-399 ; brain-cast from above, 425, from behind, 419 ; cranial characters of, 333 ; face of, 326 ; mandible of, 431, viewed from above, 446 ; position of, in human phylum, 503 ; profile of, brain-cast, 409 ; reconstruction of base of skull, 495, of face, 489, of skull, 330 ; sex of, 388 ; skull in profile, 481 ; teeth of, 455 ; vertex view of skull, 335.

The main entries in a biographical work, especially that of the principal subject of the book, are, when done

properly, so full of meaning, that, even without looking up the references in the text, one is furnished with an epitome of the person's history. Such pithy summaries of a work that one has to read are of the utmost utility, not merely for mnemonic purposes, but to help us in systematizing our knowledge.

Whatever subject, then, you may be engaged upon, apply to the encyclopædia or the indexed monograph whenever you want any point illustrated or explained. Get answers at once to every question you encounter, or note it down for speedy reference. Difficulties tend to vanish when looked at from fresh view-points, view-points very different from that of the condensed text-book. Perhaps the author of your text-book does not hold the key to your manner of mind; perhaps he has not put himself out to consider the mind of his reader, but aims simply at a complete logical statement of his theory or his facts. Look out for one who is more sympathetic. The preface or the table of contents will often tell you whether it is the book for you. Differences in the mode of approach or in the method of exposition offer ways of getting round obstacles and make progress easier and surer. You enjoy the charm of personal appeal in going to the author himself; and it is profoundly interesting to follow his line of approach, watch how he arrives at his conclusions, and afterwards see these tested by critics of like standing. It is the first stage in learning methods of research, and gives you the interest of a quest, the excitements of the chase; the truths thus gained yield a peculiar satisfaction, as if we had discovered and experienced or thought them out for ourselves.

If then we find our text-book difficult, the best way is to try another one. Of course, theoretically, we ought to stick to it until everything grows clear. If we come up against a snag, we should overcome it by mere per-

sistence. But mere persistence is often a euphemism for mechanical knowledge, mnemonics, bookishness ; it does not stand for the way of true education, but for cramming, not for true knowledge, but for getting things by rote. Pack the mind with verbal formulas, and you block the way to understanding things completely. No, it is better to let the mind find its own way. Let it try various routes until it hits upon the easy one, the one that suits it. Then the snags will prove but flimsy obstacles. Professor Adams has some amusing remarks on what he calls "the siege system of learning."<sup>1</sup> He should also be read on such questions as the rate at which we ought to read, on acquiring the knack of skipping details we do not want, and on the various ways of reading for distinct purposes. It is a mistake to think that rapid reading means inattention and want of thoroughness. Too slow a pace may simply mean that our attention is wandering, that we are being led astray by unimportant details, that we are not seizing the argument as a consecutive whole. In practice, an increase of speed and of concentration usually go together. Our rate of speed must vary, of course, with the kind of reading to be done. Only let us be on our guard against hasty assumptions, and too much reliance on such common maxims as "more haste, less speed." Consider also what Professor Adams has to say on the foolishness of reading a book conscientiously through to the end, when we might get the heart of it by reading a certain number of pages. It was a mistaken kind of puritanism that used to insist that, if a book were worth reading at all, it was worth reading through.<sup>2</sup>

This brings us to a department of the library which has not yet been mentioned, the collection of books for lending out. To read a book, as distinguished from

<sup>1</sup> *The Student's Guide*, p. 143.

<sup>2</sup> Adams, pp. 163-4.

merely consulting it for information, means that we must either possess it ourselves or borrow it. We resort to the reference library for information ; when we read for pleasure or for serious purposes of study we prefer the armchair or the writing-table. Lending libraries, fortunately, are at least as numerous to-day as the other kind ; most public libraries have lending and reference collections in the same building ; some libraries make the one stock of books serve both objects, merely safeguarding the interests of those who come for information by keeping encyclopædias, dictionaries, and similar compendiums always on the spot. Some advice on the best way to make use of the books allowed to circulate will accordingly not be out of place here. The lending and the reference library are complementary to each other, and the way to get the best out of each is to use the one to illustrate the other.

Enough has been said to make evident what is the first requisite, if we are to read with discernment and pleasure or profit—a general awareness of the manifold resources of books and libraries. The second requirement is method. Even the desultory reader, if he would not waste his time and means to get real enjoyment out of his rambles in light literature, will not set out without a plan in his head ; his plan may be rudimentary and even vague at the beginning, but it will grow in purpose and clearness as he roams further afield. The student with a definite object in view, an examination, an honours degree, a profession, a book of his own, or simply mastery of a bypath of learning, must needs take pains to map out his course some distance ahead. He may perhaps be able to obtain sound advice from a friendly person well up in the subject. If this is not forthcoming, he must draw up his list of books to be read in proper order from the various aids that have been enumerated in the

foregoing pages. J. M. Robertson's *Courses of Study* actually lays down extended itineraries in history, philosophy, science, and other spheres of scholarship; and schemes of study well adapted to the solitary reader as well as to reading-circles are to be procured from the National Home-Reading Union, and might as well be published now by that society in a separate volume. As he proceeds, the careful reader will not discard his route map; he will rather have added to it fresh items, books and authors noted from time to time as sure to be important at the right moment. He may have revised and even reconstructed it more than once, and the final edition may be a record of wide and intricate travel and exploration, a record too interesting and useful ever to be parted with.

Possibly the text-book with which one sets out may itself contain hints on further reading and be guide enough for a long while. At any rate, as was said many pages back, the text-book should not be thrown away when it has been conned from beginning to end; it will still be a chart and log-book; if only to check one's mental accounts, it is worth retaining. The best hand-books on the art of reading itself, and perhaps the only two that need be recommended, are Frederic Harrison's on *The Choice of Books, and other Literary Pieces*, or rather the hundred or so pages in the volume so entitled, and Professor John Adams's *Student's Guide*. The former is full of the wisest counsel, not only of a positive but also of a negative kind, to wit, what not to read.<sup>1</sup> One of the

<sup>1</sup> "The art of right reading is as long and difficult to learn as the art of right living" (Harrison, p. 11).

"I often think that we forget that other side to this glorious view of literature—the misuse of books, the debilitating waste of brain in aimless, promiscuous, vapid reading, or even, it may be, in the noisome inhalation of mere literary garbage and bad men's thoughts" (p. 1).

"For myself, I am inclined to think that the most useful help to

most valuable things to know in life is what things can safely be neglected. If a book is going to yield us nothing, if the time spent in reading it would have been more profitably devoted to another book, evidently it is one to avoid. That is a truism, but one we often fail to bear in mind. Our scheme of study must contain negative notes as well as memoranda of books to be read. Both must be written down at the time we ascertain the fact; we must always be on the look-out, in reading books or reviews, for well-informed criticism, casually thrown out, that will come in useful by and by.

Something has already been said also on the desirability of possessing certain books for oneself, which one can mark and annotate for future reference. The student will naturally evolve a system of lines in the margin or in the text, symbols indicating difficult or doubtful or important passages, which will help him in linking up distant portions of a work or save the trouble of reading right through again when he revises a book or chapter or merely desires to refresh the memory.<sup>1</sup> Notes made on the very page to which they refer, or on the fly-leaves at the end with page-references, obviously have an advantage over notes in a separate commonplace book; the work criticized or annotated and the actual notes are then always to be found in the same volume. The advantage is still greater when it is a question of passages that one may wish to quote some day, or simply to read over again. It may be advisable to make an index to a book, that is, of the passages which are of special signi-

reading is to know what we should not read, what we can keep out from that small cleared spot in the overgrown jungle of 'information,' the corner which we can call our ordered patch of fruit-bearing knowledge" (p. 3).

<sup>1</sup> See Professor John Adams on marking text-books, etc. (*The Student's Guide*, pp. 74-5).

ficance to oneself ; or to insert supplementary references in an existing index. But a good deal of this sort of thing will have to be done for books that we do not own ; hence some regular system of note-making and orderly preservation of notes must be devised. A good old method is that of the commonplace book, which has various merits, and demerits not a few. For permanence there is nothing better ; and, though the entries go into the book in no manner of order, it is easy to add an index when the book is full up. But this very permanence and the formality of entering up one's observations and reflexions in such a tome has something of the same effect upon the mind as the self-imposed duty of keeping a diary. We start with high resolves, and keep it up with more and more effort, until the attempt lingeringly expires. It is one thing to jot down bits in a notebook, and another to enter up our intellectual ledger. A better way is a compromise between the two which misses none of the advantages of either. This is to keep a stock of notebooks uniform in size and ruling, not very different from an ordinary school exercise-book, though it is best to have the horizontal lines and the vertical columns, if any, ruled to suit one's idiosyncrasy. When a number of these are filled, they can be bound up into a volume, with an index. A third method that will be found particularly convenient by the writer or lecturer who may require batches of notes on a book or author or other subject ready for use on occasion, is borrowed from the card index. Have a stock of some thousands of thin cards cut ; about six inches by four is a useful size. These can be kept in the books you are reading, for notes as you proceed ; they can also be used for rough outlines of essays, notes for lectures, and any fact, idea, or reference as it occurs. Such cards may be carried in the pocket, or kept within easy reach at one's bedside ; they foster the habit of pre-



serving all that is worth preserving of the results of one's mental toil, since they require no effort of resolution such as the responsibility of a commonplace book or a diary entails. Many cards having only fugitive memoranda will be thrown away, the contents of others may need to be copied out in better order on fresh cards. Those to be preserved may be tied up in bundles with indiarubber bands and endorsed, or they may be stored in the drawers of a cabinet like a card-catalogue.

References should be verified, if necessary, as we go along, and the results recorded in the note-book or on the card. If verification or elucidation is not possible at the moment, a memorandum will be made in the same place, and a space left for the entry desired. Every point not fully understood, every strange allusion, everything that is likely to be food for future thought, should be noted down on the instant. To burden the memory with it may distract attention from other matters; methodical note-making is a great help to concentration. Passages quoted verbatim should always be copied out with the utmost care for exactness, and, if they are to be used in print, should be read over again with the text. When they are from a book, the author, title, date, and page or pages should be added at the end in round brackets, or the chapter or verse if that is a better guide to the passage than the page. When from a periodical, the title, volume, date, and page must be given, together with the title of the article and the writer's name. Quotation marks (" ") must of course be put before and after, and omissions indicated by a row of three dots . . . For private use, one would naturally make free use of one's own abbreviations.

The most important use of the reference library is in conjunction with one's continuous reading. If the volume we are studying is not sufficiently provided with

maps or portraits or other illustrations, seek these valuable aids on the reference shelves. Books that contain them, if they are really desirable, and books equipped with a proper complement of notes, introduction, and other editorial matter, should always be preferred for one's private reading. And, again, do not overlook the advisability of reading the preface, the table of contents, and other introductory items; the date and other information given on the title-page is usually of the first importance to the intelligent reader. At the other end of the book there may be other valuable things—appendixes, a bibliography, an index, and, in new editions of a classic and in other cases, a series of critical or explanatory notes. In many books of a scholarly character, the table of contents gives a full analysis of the successive chapters, and this outline of the whole argument may be extremely useful, especially if there are marginal or page headings to correspond, when we come to review our reading. Of the service similarly offered by an analytical index mention has been made already.

All education is at bottom self-education. Those who read this book will presumably have reached an age when everything depends on their own efforts. They have left the atmosphere of discipline and control for that of self-help, perhaps without any guidance except such as they can secure from the printed sources that have been indicated. The best teacher is the one who knows how to direct the reading and the original activities of those under him, and help them to attain the state when they can direct themselves. A library organized on modern lines takes over the functions of the teacher, and provides the means for enabling us to direct ourselves efficiently. And knowledge gained through the free and intelligent use of libraries is as much superior to knowledge assimilated from the text-book, as knowledge which we have

found and tested and experienced for ourselves is superior to that which has been merely memorized—detestable word! Genuine knowledge is not to be acquired through any patent system of mnemonics. The usefulness of libraries rests on the opposite principle—the exercise and strengthening of the understanding rather than the memory. Mnemonics—mere text-book knowledge is rarely anything more—cultivates the memory at the expense of the intellect, leaving the brain like a *Whitaker's Almanack* and not sense enough to refer to it.

The methods of self-education commended here tend in the contrary direction. Their object is to make things real and concrete, to render the difficult and the unknown intelligible and familiar, to develop the mind without detriment to the memory, by bringing it into contact with realities and not merely with lines of print in a book. Converse with many books and all sorts of books leads not to bookishness, but gives us fuller experience of the world, the world as seen by many minds, in every conceivable aspect, as a solid and a living thing. If there is any originality in us, it will not repress but develop it, encouraging the mind to rethink problems, to weigh and judge, to make decisions and truths one's own, to observe facts for oneself, and so make our knowledge secure.



### III

## THE BRITISH MUSEUM—THE COLLECTIONS

BY ARUNDELL ESDAILE, M.A.

*Secretary of the British Museum*

*Sandars Reader in Bibliography, University of Cambridge, 1926–7*



### III

## THE BRITISH MUSEUM—THE COLLECTIONS <sup>1</sup>

BY ARUNDELL ESDAILE, M.A.

*Secretary of the British Museum*

*Sanders Reader in Bibliography, University of Cambridge, 1926-27*

CARLYLE once called the British Museum Library "the Serbonian Bog of literature," and in his day, with a printed catalogue of authors getting on for a century out of date, with large and valuable parts of it catalogued separately, and with no subject or class catalogues, it may nearly have deserved his characteristically picturesque phrase.

A description of the present system of catalogues, which has laid solid if still incomplete tracks across the Bog, is not my present task. It is rather to describe how it has accumulated and is accumulating, in what materials it is relatively rich or poor, and where and how the explorer may most hopefully search for his quarry. I say relatively; for there can be few branches of literature in which it could be called absolutely poor, though it is often hastily called so by inquirers who fail to find a particular book in it.

And I take the sub-title, "The Collections"; for the task of the Museum is primarily collection, gathering and accumulating books of all sorts, so that (in the ideal) any sort of inquirer can go to it, if not in the sure and

<sup>1</sup> Manuscripts, Oriental books, Maps, and Music are omitted in this survey.

certain hope, at least in a reasonable confidence that he will probably find there the book he wants. To that end the Museum must be omnivorous ; it must reject nothing, throw nothing away ; and in so far as it selects, it does so only because funds for purchase and for cataloguing are limited. In the abstract there is practically no printed literature, of books or of *βιβλία ἀβιβλία*, which the Museum would not rather possess than not.

The collections, then, have been got together in several ways :

(1) Gathering whole large libraries.

(2) Adding special collections by bequest, gift, or purchase.

(3) By the copyright acts.

(4) By purchase of current foreign books.

(5) By miscellaneous buying of older books to fill gaps.

The first was the natural method of starting such a library. Sir Hans Sloane included in the bequest of his museum his library of 40,000 books, and to it were quickly added the old collections of the kings of England from Henry VII to George II, so far as they remained intact. Both these libraries were of the old type, largely Latin and learned, but representing all branches of knowledge. Sloane's was of course more scientific, the Royal more historical. But those were the happy days when the growing complexity of knowledge had not forced a close specialism on scholars, and the ideal of the "doctor universalis" was still real, nor was it a necessary consequence of knowing many things that one should know them all badly.

It is impossible not to regret the absence of a third great library of that day, that of the Harleys, Earls of Oxford. When the Harleian manuscripts were added to the Royal collection the printed books were sold to a bookseller, Osborne, and sold cheaply ; and the



immense wealth of that collection in old English pamphlet literature was lost, and had to be slowly and imperfectly made good in the succeeding centuries. Throughout the eighteenth century the fund for purchase seems to have been derived mainly, if not entirely, from the interest on £7,000 bequeathed by a Major Arthur Edwards, and gaps such as that made by the Harleian library were really left for the nineteenth century to fill.

The greatest general library which has gone to swell the Museum collections is that of King George III. Owing to his grandfather's gift to the nation of the Old Royal Library, the young king found himself bookless, and in the course of his long reign collected a very large and fine library on the old universal plan. Like its predecessors it was a working library, not a connoisseur's collection, and though it contains many fine copies, especially of incunabula and early classics generally, it also contains many cut and shabby volumes. But when it came in, in 1829, it doubled the size of the library (though one must not forget that the deduction of duplicates would bring down the net increase), and the handsome new wing which Smirke designed to hold it was the first word in the death sentence of that homely and charming old Montague House, to the disappearance of which (necessary as no doubt it was) even the size and splendour of the Museum as we know it cannot reconcile me.

In at least two fields the King's Library (as it has always been called, in contrast to the Old Royal Library) immensely enriched the Museum; these are English literature and early printing, neither of which had in the days of the Old Royal Library been thought worthy of collecting *per se*, and for which in the latter half of the eighteenth century the Museum had no funds. To the books in the King's Library a large

collection of prints and maps was added, and these were the subject of a separate catalogue. In 1820-29 a catalogue of the Library was published, and Sir Frederick Barnard, the librarian, in his preface, sets out the scope and intention of the king very well.

“Private libraries are most frequently confined to the particular studies and partial taste of their possessors: so that though they may be very complete in such branches of knowledge as their proprietors cultivated or preferred, they remain very deficient in all others.

“The present Royal Library is an eminent exception to these observations; it has been collected upon such a comprehensive and liberal design of embracing every species of knowledge, that the Possessor of it can call to his aid, upon any subject, all the learning and wisdom which the mind of man has hitherto communicated to the world.”

The King's Library books bear the pressmarks 1-304 and C [i.e. Cases] 1-16; the latter contain the cream.

William IV established yet a third Royal Library, and entailed it, so that it should not follow its two predecessors to the public; and this, with a few fine books reserved from the King's Library in 1823, now forms the nucleus of the King's private library at Windsor.

Two other complete libraries have come to the Museum, and are kept as separate collections, but were rather large collections of rarities than general libraries. The first, that of the Rev. Clayton Mordaunt Cracherode preceding the King's, was bequeathed, with that collector's coins and prints, in 1799; formed largely from the dispersal of the libraries of the French émigrés, it is distinguished by the beauty of the copies and by

the number of fine bindings made for Grolier and other older collectors which it contains. Many were bound for Cracherode by Roger Payne. I cannot refrain from adding a word of praise of Cracherode's own armorial book-stamp, surrounded with a bay wreath, which has always seemed to me to be a model for such stamps, and of the monogram he wrote inside the volumes. He was, in fact, pre-eminently a man of fine taste. The Cracherode collection is kept in a room bearing that name, and is pressmarked 671-688.

The next, and if not so large as the King's, even finer, was that of Thomas Grenville, who survived his political career for nearly half a century, and at Panizzi's suggestion bequeathed his collection to the nation; it is housed in the room in which the illuminated manuscripts are exhibited, and a poor bust of Grenville stands in it.

Like King George's library, the Grenville is rich in English literature (but not in plays) and in early printed books; it also abounds even more in classics, in voyages, and in romances. The condition of the Grenville books is very good, if not often quite so good as that of the Cracherode. Many of them are necessarily duplicates of books in the King's or the general library, and these are kept in reserve, only being issued on special request. Grenville books bear the pressmark G, followed by the number of the volume in the collection.

This is perhaps the place to notice another great eighteenth-century library which came to the Museum by bequest, that of Sir Joseph Banks, President of the Royal Society, which was bequeathed in 1820. It is more a special working collection than a general library, being devoted to science (especially botany) and travels; it fills the side room which pairs with the Cracherode Room and is called the Banksian Room;

the pressmarks of his books are 431-462 and 953-990, also B. 1-745. Anne Seymour Damer's fine bronze bust of Banks presides over the whole. The effect is somewhat spoiled by the labours of members of the staff, an element in the existence of a library which Smirke, when he designed the building, entirely failed to recognize or provide for.

One recent whole library has come to the Museum, that of Henry Spencer Ashbee, which was bequeathed in 1900. It is not of the size or importance of the others, and has not been kept separate, but it is distinguished by the number of fine editions of modern French and Spanish writers which it contains. Moreover, the Cervantes books in this library made it worth while to gather and segregate the whole of the Museum's Cervantes collection, which now bears the special pressmark "Cerv." This had previously been done for the *Imitatio Christi*, the editions of which are marked I. X, and are subdivided by languages.

The bequest of whole libraries without the power to alienate duplicates (and without specific permission the Museum alienates nothing presented or bequeathed) can now be but rarely profitable: for any library must contain numbers of duplicates, triplicates, and even quadruplicates of books already there. But exception must be made for collections in which the books are represented by fine copies, which, like the Grenville, can be kept in reserve, and not be exposed to the wear and tear of working copies. This is especially true of modern English literature. For the first editions of famous modern writers are received and treated exactly like those of any other writers; and indeed there is of necessity a period before they become famous and when they are at best merely prominent. These books will be a good deal read and handled, as they become known

more than those of minor men, and at a later stage, when they have become really famous, they can be and are put into reserved cases under glass, but it is then too late to attempt to keep them in spotless collector's condition—which, from the Museum point of view, means condition fit for exhibition in the King's Library. When the day comes for including them in such an exhibition these first editions are found to be perfect, no doubt, but shabby and thumb-marked, and often rebound in the Museum's serviceable but not very elegant binding. Miss May Morris some years ago made the Library the very handsome present of a reserve set of her father's Kelmscott Press books. If another Grenville or Cracherode should arise, his fine copies, treasured from the first in private cabinets, would serve in just this way as a reserve, kept together as a collection, under the donor's name, and would stand behind and support the Museum's worn working copies of the great modern authors.

There are modified forms of gift or bequest. Of one, the gift of whatever the Museum lacks from the donor's library, I do not remember any very notable example, though I remember one instance where a testator provided for it, but without legal force, and his wishes were ignored by his executors. Quite lately, however, the Museum was given its pick, amounting to over 4,000 pieces, from the pamphlets in the late Mr. Gladstone's library at Hawarden, and in the aggregate these substantially enrich its resources in the ecclesiastical and political history of nineteenth-century Europe.

The second is to give the Museum its choice of a limited number of volumes from a collection. This was devised by Mr. Alfred Huth, and when the great library formed by his father and himself was brought to the hammer, the Museum was in the position of

having already acquired under this bequest the fifty books which it most urgently needed, and to buy which, if it could have done so at all at open auction, would have exhausted its funds; those funds were thus set free for the purchase of numerous less valuable books, and these have been placed with the original thirty-seven (the first thirteen of the fifty were MSS.), and all bear the special pressmark "Huth." Mr. Huth's bequest entailed the duty of publishing a special catalogue, and this was done, as Malory would say, "in the most orgulous wise," as an expression of the Trustees' gratitude.

There are also certain bibliographers who make a practice of giving the Museum any books, not already there, which they have collected in the course of their work; and in this way many gaps, not perhaps individually important, but cumulatively not negligible, are filled. I would commend all these three ways of doing a public-spirited act, which make it not the sole privilege of rich men, but bring it within the reach of comparatively humble book-lovers.

Besides general libraries the national library has from time to time acquired many special collections. I cannot mention more than a few.

David Garrick, as a producer and reviver of plays, possessed a large collection, including Shakespeare and other Elizabethans. These plays came to the Museum after Mrs. Garrick's death in 1823, and are of immense value and importance; since before that, except for George III, whose library came in the same year, none of the great collectors had troubled about plays, which Bodley called "baggage books." Johnson and Lamb both used the Garrick plays. The mass of the collection is in presses 642-643, but the most valuable volumes have been picked out and placed in a reserved case (C. 34).

But the first to come and the most remarkable, is the Thomason collection of pamphlets of the Civil War (to be exact, 22,255 pieces bound in 2,008 volumes, dated from February 1640 to the end of 1661). Thomason was a London bookseller, and his glory is that he perceived the historical value that the fugitive pamphlet literature of his time would acquire. He died in 1666, and his representatives held the collection, which gradually decreased in price until on his accession King George III purchased it, and in 1762 presented the tracts to the newly-founded British Museum, where they were for long called the King's Tracts. They are distinguishable in the General Catalogue by the pressmark E preceding a number. In 1908 a special catalogue of them appeared, edited by the late George Fortescue. Thomason's methodical habit of noting the exact date on the title-pages enabled the compilers to arrange this catalogue chronologically; so that to follow the pamphlets of the Civil War by its aid is almost as exact a way of tracing the curves of public opinion as is the study of a modern daily newspaper. The index to this catalogue, by the way, is bibliographically inadequate, and to look pamphlets up in it by their authors or titles is often a waste of time. It was rather conceived of as an historical or subject index to the contents of the collection. Many booksellers do not know this, and state from the index that books are not among the Thomason tracts when they are.

No other country, I believe, has anything like so full a collection of material for any important period in its history as this, which Carlyle declared was "greatly preferable to all the sheepskins in the Tower and other places, for informing the English what the English were in former times."

The British Museum is the natural home for the

material for the history of our own Revolution ; but it must be regarded as very fortunate in possessing an almost equally exhaustive collection of the printed pamphlet literature of the French Revolution. I should not like to guess how many pieces there are in this ; but they are bound in some four thousand volumes. There are really three separate collections, pressmarked respectively F., F.R., and R. ; the first was purchased from a French owner through the offices of John Wilson Croker in 1818, while the other two were purchased from Croker himself in 1831 and 1856. In 1899 a short summary, not a detailed catalogue, of the whole was compiled for the Trustees by G. K. Fortescue, who also later edited the catalogue of the Thomason tracts, and was thus enabled to make, in a paper which he read to the Bibliographical Society,<sup>1</sup> a significant comparison between the contemporary literatures of the two revolutions.

The seventeenth century was that in which the newspaper was born out of the ballad and the news-quarto. The ballad, hawked round the country by pedlars, the tribe of Autolycus, sung in market-places, and pasted on the walls of farmhouses, is as rich a store of knowledge of old English life as the news-quarto is of old English politics. Thomason's collection of them (in 669. f.) is only a tithe of those in the Museum. One wealthy shelf (C. 22. f.) groans under a row of immense folio volumes, containing the Roxburghe, Narcissus Luttrell, and other minor collections ; and elsewhere in the library are the three volumes of similar sheets collected by Bagford early in the eighteenth century (C. 40. m. 9-11), and also a volume from Osterley Park, which was presented in 1885 by the late Lord Crawford, whose own collection, at Haigh Hall, is the only great one still left in private hands.

<sup>1</sup> *Transactions of the Bibliographical Society*, vols. viii and ix.



All these are mainly of the Restoration period ; and far more valuable, sheet for sheet, if less voluminous, is the volume of some seventy Elizabethan ballads, including several quoted by Shakespeare, which formed No. 50 of the Huth bequest, and which I had the instructive and happy labour of cataloguing. The twin collection at Britwell (the two together being the unregarded bundle which once belonged to the housekeeper at Helmingham Hall) was sold a few years ago at auction for a price far exceeding the Museum's top-note, and is now one of the gems of the great Huntington Library at San Gabriel, California.

Ballads were long popular ; indeed, I believe some are still produced. But I know of no contemporary collection ; the late Sabine Baring-Gould made a collection in ten volumes, which has joined the others I have mentioned, and is at Bks. 3.g.4.<sup>1</sup>

The moral is that whenever one sees any printed matter being hawked in the street, one should get it—and present one's collection to the Museum.

Thomason's early small quarto newspapers of the Civil War are supplemented, and carried on till the opening of the nineteenth century by the large collection formed by Charles Burney, D.D., the younger, and bought by Parliament after his death in 1817, with his great classical and theatrical collections. Of all literature perhaps the newspaper is the most fugitive—the sun

“ sets, and each ephemeral insect then  
Is gathered into death without a dawn,  
And the immortal stars awake again.”

The Museum's and the Bodleian's are, I believe, the

<sup>1</sup> All these separate pieces, except those in the Baring-Gould collection, are individually entered in the General Catalogue ; but it is useful to know where a mass of any given class of fugitive literature is to be found.

only really large collections in the country ; without two or three benefactors the Bodleian, and without Burney the Museum, would be lamentably poor. These Burney newspapers are kept in the Newspaper Room, and are bound up, not each newspaper as a series, but the whole lot year by year and day by day, which is perhaps a better way than the other, but necessitates elaborate indexing. They are only now being entered in the General Catalogue ; nor is there any special printed list of them ; but the *Times Tercentenary Hand List of Newspapers* enters at least a very large number.

Another very valuable collection of newspapers is that of Continental papers filed by the Ministry of Information during the war ; there is also a large store of war posters. For suppressed and seditious matter of 1914-18 you must, however, go to Cambridge, where the collection will one day be regarded somewhat as we regard the Thomason tracts.

Burney collected not only newspapers but play-bills and theatrical records, and his vast collection of these is also in the Museum, catalogued under his name ; the Newspaper Room contains yet others from other sources. But it is not probable that Parliament would have bought his library had it not been for his annotated texts of the classics, which are less used now but are nevertheless really important.

Two early eighteenth-century men collected title-pages and printed fragments, and their collections have been sucked into the gulf of the Museum ; they were Joseph Ames and John Bagford. Ames's came through William Herbert, who used them, as Ames had done in 1749, for the *Typographical Antiquities*, 1785 ; Bagford's were bought at his death in 1716 by Harley, and somehow came to the Museum with the Harleian MSS. They are now in the Department of Printed Books. An

analysis, but not an index, of their contents is to be found in the Bibliographical Society's *Transactions*, vol. vii, pp. 143-160.

A number of miscellaneous collections of newspaper cuttings and the like may be found in the General Catalogue under the heading COLLECTION.

The Library is the not very obviously appropriate repository of the great bequest of postage stamps made by Mr. Thomas Keay Tapling in 1891; and in 1913 it was enriched by the gift of the whole Philatelic Section, running to some thousands of volumes, of the late Lord Crawford's Bibliotheca Lindesiana.

One of the most gracious gifts which the Museum has received, if not one of the large ones, is that made so lately as in 1921 by Mr. Charles John Barker, of Purley, consisting of some seventy volumes of works by Jacob Boehme, the German mystic; for Mr. Barker not only practically completed the Museum's set of this author, but provided the cost of reprinting that whole enlarged heading in the General Catalogue, so that it has been issued separately, as was that of Cervantes after the Ashbee bequest. The cost of printing the catalogue now forbids the Trustees to carry on the gradual reprinting of swollen sections, and is almost a shadow on our gratitude for useful but minor donations; Mr. Barker's gift is a perfect piece of thoughtful generosity, and (as most people have favourite authors) is an example which, it may be hoped, will be followed.

Two classes of books have, like the editions of Cervantes and the *Imitatio Christi*, already mentioned, been assembled. The most important is that of the incunabula, numbering nearly 10,000, which bear the press-marks (according to their size) I.A, I.B, or I.C, and are arranged in what is called "Proctor order," by countries, towns, and presses; they are being specially catalogued

in the great *Catalogue of Fifteenth-Century Books*, of which my friend Mr. Scholderer has charge, and of which six volumes of the eight have appeared. Books in the King's and Grenville libraries (which must be kept intact) are represented on the incunabula shelves by stiff boards for dummies bearing the references—a plan which may often be found useful in assembling special collections in a library. The principle of arranging classes in a chronological order has much to say for it; at the University Library, Cambridge, the English books to 1640 are so arranged in decades, but after the incunabula nothing here is so placed except the modern novels, which from 1817–1848 and again from 1912 are to be found in two chronological series, labelled respectively N and NN (Novels and New Novels). It would be a great advantage to be able to send for (say) specimen illustrated children's books from each year or each third year for half a century. Individual books could always be found from the General Catalogue. This would make the shelf classification, even without open access, of some use. It may be mentioned here that centuries of particular countries are being made the matter of special hand-lists. Spanish and French books to 1600 have been thus dealt with, and English books from 1641 to 1700, to follow the catalogue of those to 1640, are in hand.

I must now, at the risk of bestowing all my tediousness upon you, mention certain classes which are not fully catalogued in the General Catalogue.

(1) British newspapers; of the nineteenth century there is a printed, of the eighteenth (Burney) a MS. catalogue.

(2) The Parliamentary papers (British) which are to be seen in the Newspaper Room and of which an index is kept there.

(3) Colonial and Foreign State Papers, received by Government exchange; a hand-list of these is being prepared.

(4) German University Dissertations, which are kept bound in a classification by University, faculty, year, and author's name.

(5) Modern sale catalogues, which are for the most part only entered as series under the auctioneers, but which up to 1900 are fully entered in the published Catalogue of Sale Catalogues, 1915.

(6) Books on the manufacture of explosives.

(7) Books suppressed or for personal reasons not to be issued till a certain period has elapsed.

(8) The Place Collection of pamphlets and cuttings relating to the economic and political history of this country in 1800–1850.

(9) Parliamentary Poll Books, kept at Hendon.

(10) The publications of the Catholic Truth Society are separately indexed, as being very numerous and mostly very slight pieces.

(11) Under the heading **COLLECTION** in the catalogue may be found many small assemblages of pieces not separately catalogued.

Hand-lists of most of these classes may be consulted in the Reading Room on application to the superintendent.

It is the cost of printing which makes these hand-lists preferable. Also one can get a conspectus of the collection; and the large bequests and purchases I have enumerated are not the Museum library's regular diet. That consists of copyright and the annual Parliamentary purchase grant.

(1) *Copyright*.—With the Old Royal Library the Museum inherited in 1759 the Crown's claim to a copy of every book published, a claim dating from the previous century. It is very difficult now to estimate its effect;

the English books of the latter half of the eighteenth century acquired when new are scattered about the several hundred presses which come between the Old Royal Library and the new Library in "the ironwork" of 1857 on. But to judge from the lacunæ which can be observed, the effect was at the best very spasmodic. The Act of 1842 and the energetic enforcement of it by Panizzi, our Napoleon, greatly stimulated the flow of books into the national library; and in the latter half of the nineteenth century very little but comparatively obscure provincial books and technical books not issued by regular publishers seems to be missing. A very considerable proportion of the more (and a huge quantity of the less) valuable American books come in by copyright. Many, but not all, of these, come under the Act as having alternative London imprints. Books from the British Empire, including India, are also received; but not very exhaustively; nor do they fill a patriotic and book-loving Briton with pride. The British Museum seems to be better fed by the copyright law than was the Bibliothèque Nationale at Paris, if one could judge by the latter's accession lists issued weekly in the *Bibliographie de la France*; but a tightening up of the French law has recently taken place, with very good results. The practice of keeping everything is often decried, but it is for future historians, to whom nonsense is often as instructive as sense, to judge.

(2) *Purchase*.—In the eighteenth century the Museum had no regular purchase grant, but used the interest of Major Arthur Edwards's £7,000, bequeathed before its actual foundation. The result of this starvation was seen when the Heber library was sold in 1834–1837. The dispersal of this immense collection of old English literature was the making of the Britwell Library; the books went at low prices, but the Museum could not buy; and

now that they have been resold, nearly a century later, prices have so increased that the Museum could still buy only a few of the many unique books that it should have had. The first business of a national library is to provide the material for the advanced student of the nation's history and literature, and so to educate the educators, teachers and writers. The Heber sale was as great an opportunity for English literature as the Harleian had been for English history. Both were lost.

But in 1845, by the influence of Panizzi, Parliament made a special annual grant, and in 1846 the Museum was a large purchaser of books that had been sold in 1844 at the sale of the Duke of Sussex's library; from about this date the practice of writing (later stamping) the date of acquisition on every newly-acquired book came in, to our great profit. The library was very rapidly built up during the next generation. This was the period of what Mr. Pollard has recently described as "faith-inspired general buying." A good example of this is the purchase in 1857 of *Stockdale's Budget*, 1826-27. In Nos. 1-9 of this sorry sheet, Stockdale, the fallen publisher, related his transaction with Shelley over *Original Poetry by Victor and Cazire*. Garnett noticed this in 1866, and pointed out that this unknown and previously unheard-of book must be Shelley's first publication. It was not till 1890 or thereabouts that a copy of the book was found; but for the purchase by the Museum of the *Budget* it might have continued for another century unidentified. After almost exactly half a century the special grant lapsed, and the purchase grant for books is now about £6,500, though books are now perhaps five times as numerous as in 1845, and old ones are certainly twenty times as expensive. For a few post-war years the depreciated Continental currencies

saved the Museum ; but the crisis is with us again. The Royal Commission on Museums has (1930) reported in favour of an increased purchase grant.

A substantial part of the grant is of necessity spent upon important English Societies' and foreign periodicals and sets of memoirs ; about £1,500 a year can be set aside for older books when the chief books produced abroad have been acquired ; this can be occasionally supplemented for great sales and the like from the Trustees' unallocated reserve.

The principles and methods of book selection, as practised in the Museum, are rather surprising to those trained in small libraries ; but they suit the special needs of the place. The task is not divided among the staff by subject, but by language ; thus it falls to one individual to choose French books on all subjects, not historical books in all languages. Reviews are only used as a second line of defence against the irruption of bad books, especially for imaginative literature ; the books are marked in the first instance in the announcements in the current national trade lists, weekly or fortnightly. This saves time, both in selecting and in getting the books in. Nor does it sacrifice efficiency. It is surprising how easy it is from the indications given in a publisher's announcement to distinguish between a contribution to knowledge and a Christmas present. One soon learns to weigh in the balances the author, the publisher, the subject, the title, the relative importance of plates and text, the publisher's language in his puff preliminary, and many other straws. If a few impostors slip through, no great harm is done when one is buying on a large scale. For novels, poetry, drama, etc., there is nothing for it but personal knowledge or advice from those who have it ; national libraries can help each other here.

The Museum still buys largely ; but it is not possible



to buy everything. Preference is accordingly given to literature, history, and topography or local history. In most branches of science all original work appears in periodicals and series of memoirs, to many of which the Museum subscribes; the books follow and are mere popularizations. Also there are great special scientific libraries in London, notably that of the Science Library at South Kensington. The *World List of Scientific Periodicals*, showing the British libraries where they can be seen, will make these collections much more useful, especially if used with the various indices to periodicals. But large comprehensive works of reference are worth buying. Technical books are much the same in all languages; and many British and American works find their way into the Museum; so that few from abroad are purchased. But of the best historical and literary output of the world not much escapes the net. The Museum library remains in theory and ideal universal; and it is most undesirable that any class of literature should be regarded as outside its scope. A single student may need the most diverse books, and may need them in one place.

To all this complicated assembly of general and special collections it is clear that open access would be a snare and a delusion. For books of a particular class may be found in, say, six or eight different places, and the rarer ones would be under glass. Something might be done, however, in the provision of class lists, not merely of books of particular centuries and countries but of particular subjects. These class lists need not be brought later than 1880, when the Subject Index begins.

Here, then, we have, gathered in these various ways, in spite of inadequate funds and the difficulties which hamper potential benefactors to-day, the greatest and—may I say it?—the most generously conducted library in the world, to serve which is an honour and a pride.

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# IV

## THE BRITISH MUSEUM FOR RESEARCH PURPOSES

BY G. F. BARWICK, B.A.

*Late Keeper of Printed Books, British Museum*





THE BRITISH MUSEUM FOR RESEARCH  
PURPOSES

BY G. F. BARWICK, B.A.

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THE greatest advantage is gained for general research when the largest and most varied collections are brought together in one building, and this is specially the case in the British Museum, which affords unique facilities for the student and researcher. Printed books and manuscripts are of course intimately connected, and it is with them that we are chiefly concerned; but maps, prints, coins, and medals are so often helpful in historical and literary investigations that attention will be called to them as occasion arises. The use of reference books has been dealt with elsewhere in this volume, and any that may be mentioned in this connexion are merely cited to illustrate some special point in research.

To seek out what has been printed and published on even a small subject is a task of no small magnitude, and W. H. Hudson in his *Book of a Naturalist* (p. 186) gives an estimate which is really by no means exaggerated, and coming from a field-naturalist is peculiarly interesting. He writes: "Among the thousand and one projects I have entertained at various times was one for a work on Snakes, with the good though somewhat ambitious title of 'The Book of the Serpent.' . . . As it was a work requiring a great deal of research, it would take a long

time to write. . . . Collecting material would have to be a slow process, involving the perusal or consultation of a thousand volumes and probably ten thousand periodicals and annals and proceedings and journals of many natural history societies, great and small, of many countries. . . . All would have to be sought in the British Museum and one or two other dim, stuffy libraries, where a man sits in a chair all day and all the year round with a pile of books before him."

Research, fortunately, is in general far more limited in scope; and historical, genealogical, and literary investigations usually mean endeavours to verify details; these, however, are often lengthy and difficult enough, as witness the time and energy that has been spent in tracing the identity of the Man in the Iron Mask, or the author of the *Letters of Junius*.

Let us now see what aids the Museum affords to researchers in English history. First of all there is the practically complete collection of all the printed books on the subject, in every language. When the author's full name is known these are readily findable in the General Catalogue, but anonymous books and pamphlets, which bulk large in historical research, offer more difficulty, and the very vastness of the catalogue, about twelve hundred volumes, adds somewhat to the difficulty. But consultation becomes easier by bearing in mind that the bases of its headings, taken from the title-pages, are: (1) the author's names, initials, or pseudonyms, or simple description, such as a Lady, a Farmer, etc.; (2) a personal name mentioned or clearly indicated in the title; (3) a geographical name; (4) the first substantive. Where the description of the author is a circumlocution, it is of course disregarded, as for instance, in a book of 1722, "*The Groans of Believers*. By a learned, faithful, zealous and reverend minister of the Gospel in the Church of

Scotland," which is entered under the first substantive. Two headings deserve special mention: (1) Academies,<sup>1</sup> etc., in which all the learned societies publishing original work are entered under the town in which they are situated; (2) Periodical Publications, in which periodicals, as distinct from newspapers, are similarly arranged. Newspapers, Maps, and Music have separate catalogues.

There is a complete subject-index of modern books added to the library since 1880, which is kept up by printing a fresh volume every five years. In the meantime, a current subject-index is kept in the Reading Room from the date of the last printed volume. For the period before 1880 recourse must be had to special bibliographies, and the most important of these are to be found in the index volume of the catalogue of the books placed in the Reading Room. It may be noticed that the five-yearly volumes form to a certain extent a continuation of the printed catalogue, which was widely distributed, and thus a knowledge of the contents of the Library is available in every literary centre in the world.

In the Department of Manuscripts there are rich and varied collections of original documents, especially the Cotton, Harleian, and Sloane, which are household words among scholars. The series called Additional Manuscripts contains all those not forming part of the special collections. These tens of thousands of documents are all fully indexed. Many persons have a dread of attempting research among manuscripts, thinking that they are hard to read, and doubtless there are many difficulties in early ones, especially in the contractions so freely used, but an ordinary seventeenth-century document is often far clearer than many a twentieth-century one.

In addition to the printed books and manuscripts above mentioned, there are the printed catalogues and

<sup>1</sup> See p. 89n.

lists of every other library of note. Some of the comparatively small ones, such as those of the Foreign and Colonial Offices, War Office, Patent Office, and the great law libraries, are often useful as time-savers, in addition to the information they may contain; for the judicious searcher will often be able to identify a Smith, Brown, Jones, or Robinson, whose Christian name he does not know, and thus save the labour of wading through those long headings in the General Catalogue. Also these catalogues generally have subject indexes and furthermore are arranged from their own standpoint and not subject to the hard-and-fast rules of a great general library. The mine of wealth contained in the Calendars and Indexes of the Public Record Office can all be conveniently consulted at Bloomsbury and the original documents noted for subsequent examination in Chancery Lane. The publications of the Historical Manuscripts Commission are also full of information, and if they do not often contain documents printed *in extenso* at all events they locate them.

As regards the history of other countries it is perhaps sufficient to say that the Museum Library is the richest in the world in the books of every country save the native one, and occasionally it is even better than that. For instance, a French scholar writing on the Revolution of 1789 must needs have recourse to London, if his work is to be exhaustive, for the largest and most complete collections of French pamphlets of that period are in the Museum, and there is certainly a considerable quantity of Russian books that do not exist, or at all events are not available, in Russia. By a system of international exchange the government publications of most foreign countries come regularly to the Museum Library; the others are always acquired by purchase where possible. In this connexion may be noted the

admirable and increasing practice of publishing reproductions in facsimile of important manuscripts and even of very rare printed matter, and the student should look out for these carefully as they often supersede an earlier and less trustworthy issue.

Passing now from History to its handmaiden Biography, the first aids to searchers are naturally the dictionaries of general and national biography, which usually give references to books and sometimes to manuscripts; the histories and bibliographies of counties and localities, and the large general encyclopædias, such as the *Britannica*, *Larousse*, *Brockhaus*, etc. For the Middle Ages Chevalier's *Bio-bibliographie* is particularly valuable as a short cut to the sources, which can then be looked up in the Museum catalogues. But the meagre records of even the fullest dictionaries and encyclopædias are quite inadequate for anyone who is attempting to get a real idea of a personality, and even the printed "lives" can often be delightfully supplemented by letters and diaries still in manuscript, and by portraits or even a series of portraits, such as can be found in the Department of Prints and Drawings. Medals also should not be neglected; they have been struck on so many private occasions to commemorate some heroic deed or some notable occurrence. Not long ago one was shown to the present writer which was given to a man who after a severe struggle had succeeded in paying his creditors in full. Only one copy was struck, and in it was inserted a mirror with the inscription, "Behold the honest man." This is mentioned merely to emphasize the advisability of consulting any collection that is indexed, for the chance is at least worth the time spent in looking up a name. Original letters, of which there is an immense collection in the Department of Manuscripts, are especially useful in identifying signatures and hand-

writing. Only a few weeks ago it was found possible in a few minutes to identify a Latin signature of about 1550 on a title-page, by reference to a single letter in Latin; the numerous English letters were quite useless as the so-called Italian hand was used. It was the practice at that period to use two entirely different scripts, and with signatures in English script only identification would have been absolutely impossible.

From Biography to Genealogy is a natural transition, and the sources are much the same for both, but genealogy is a subject which needs the most scrupulous and careful investigation. It often resolves itself into an attempt to find missing links and to establish legitimacy of descent in cases of property or rank. A large amount of research used to be carried on by and for Americans, but doubtless by this time every human being carried on board the *Mayflower* has been annexed by some family or other in the United States, just as every known companion of William the Conqueror has been annexed in England. For genealogical research the Museum offers an unequalled series of county histories, several of them with copious printed and manuscript insertions; sometimes each volume is expanded into two or more in this way; such a copy is said to be Grangerized, from J. Granger, who published in 1769 a history of England with blank leaves for notes and illustrations. A good example is a copy of Manning and Bray's *History of Surrey*, in three volumes, expanded to thirty. The searcher should look out for these in the General Catalogue, bearing in mind that entries of books to which special interest attaches are placed after the entry of the ordinary copy. Mention need hardly be made of the long series of peerages, books of landed gentry, school and college lists, which are in the alphabet of the subject, but attention may be called to the number of pedigrees

in manuscript and of those privately printed, which ultimately reach the Museum. The indexes to manuscripts take the inquirer further on his way and local history often affords valuable help.

This brings us to Topography, in which the Museum stands pre-eminent, not only as regards our own country, but for the entire world. The fact that, as stated above, the name of a place is taken as next in importance to that of a person in cataloguing anonymous books, has given a geographical character to the General Catalogue, which is clearly recognizable, and this has undoubtedly exercised no small influence on the acquisition of topographical works. British topography has been fairly well indexed one way or another, but special attention may here be called to the other two volumes of Chevalier's *Répertoire des sources historiques du moyen-âge*, bearing the sub-title "topo-bibliographie" or bibliography of places. A book often contains much more than is indicated or even implied in the title, and this is a case in point. Seeing that ecclesiastical establishments loom so large in the topography of the Middle Ages, one would not be surprised to find such headings as: "Baptism, Eucharist, Marriage, Breviaries, Missals," etc., but when one finds also animals, rings, new year's gifts, pirates and piracy, repasts, including breakfast, dinner, and supper, troubadours and trouvères, it becomes evident that the book is a kind of inquire within, which should not be overlooked. Searchers, too, are sometimes deterred by the words "moyen-âge" in the title, but of course in these volumes Chevalier includes the most recent works, provided that they deal with the subject in the period of the Middle Ages. Chevalier's work is a subject-index, but French bibliographers often prefer the author catalogue with a "table méthodique," like Brunet, who places all his material under the five great

divisions : theology, law, science and art, belles lettres, and history, with sub-sections under each. It is sometimes exceedingly difficult to locate the particular section for some out-of-the-way subject—for instance, fireworks—but by looking out the author of some well-known book on the subject and then turning to the serial numbers in the table the other similar works will be found clustered round it. On the other hand Le Long's great *Bibliothèque historique de la France* is arranged chronologically, and its nine copious indexes make it one of the easiest books to use.

The Department of Manuscripts is correspondingly rich in topography, and the unpublished letters of known residents should not be neglected, as they often contain interesting details. Maps of course are of the essence of the subject and local newspapers are often helpful. There is one source of information that usually escapes notice, namely the Post Office Directories. Few people seem to be aware that to each town, parish, or even hamlet is prefixed a short historical sketch, which forms a basis for further research, and sometimes contains matter that has come to light since the publication of the latest county history. Much time may be wasted in searching out particulars which are given in the Directory for the county. Another valuable work which often escapes notice, because it is only a supplement, is the *Dictionnaire de géographie*, forming part of Brunet's well-known Manual ; it is invaluable for the etymology of the names of places, and for much other interesting information.

Turning now to literary and miscellaneous research we find a more extensive and difficult field. One of the most interesting quests is the identification of the authorship of anonymous works. As regards books of any importance a great deal has been done, but plenty



still is left to be discovered, especially in the matter of pamphlets and contributions to periodicals. How often we read in the biographies of notable authors that for many years they wrote for the magazines, and the names of Swift and Defoe stand as instances of those whose early work is still to a large extent unidentified. Now in this direction the Museum offers unequalled facilities, for in no other library is there anything approaching the range and completeness of its sets of magazines and similar periodicals. A fine appreciation of differences in style is of course a great requisite in such researches, and to that should be added a knowledge of the points of view of the editors of the periodicals, usually obtainable from the publications themselves. This is, however, research for those whose time is at their own command. For minor matters there are two excellent publications, *Notes and Queries* and its French equivalent, the *Intermédiaire des chercheurs*. The former has full indexes, but it takes some time to look through them; the latter has two, covering the period 1864 to 1920. There are also the various general indexes to periodicals, those to a periodical itself, and those to the transactions of learned societies, taking the word learned in its widest sense to include any society that publishes original matter. These and all similar publications either supply all the information sought for, or at least give useful references to books and manuscripts, which are usually findable in the Museum.

Newspapers are constantly being searched for many objects. A very important one is in connexion with legal proceedings; libel among the unpleasant ones; the preservation of public paths, rights of way, commons and woods among those of general utility: here local newspapers often record the best and perhaps the only evidence of what lawyers call "user," that is, the

continued use or enjoyment of a right. Few people realize that the Museum preserves and binds up files of these papers, more or less complete ; they are stored in a large building at Hendon, where there is fortunately ample room for expansion, and they are brought up to Bloomsbury as required. Of course they have no indexes, but the Index to the *Times* is often helpful, for it not only aids in finding something about the matter in hand, but on ascertaining the exact date the searcher can proceed with ease to consult other newspapers, also magazines and reviews, especially those in which a fuller account might be expected. If the subject of research be a foreign one this aid is particularly welcome, for foreign periodicals seldom have any index. The newsletters in manuscript, which preceded the newspaper, deserve special mention.

Few libraries can afford space for successive editions of encyclopædias, but their value for research is often considerable ; for instance, the edition of Meyer's great *Konversations Lexikon*, 1840-55, is in forty-four large volumes, but in later editions, in order to be up to date and not too cumbrous, it has been necessary to scrap a vast mass of material as obsolete, especially historical matter relating to the great German families. But nothing is obsolete to the researcher. The French have always been great encyclopædists from the days of Bayle, d'Alembert, Diderot, and Voltaire to Larousse of to-day. The Museum contains of course the entire series of these vast works ; the earlier ones are especially valuable for showing the trend of French thought, and Larousse for width of range and minuteness of detail.

As would naturally be expected, the Museum is very rich in catalogues of sales of books, which are preserved in the Library, and of other objects, which are kept in the Departments concerned. For instance, sets

of auction catalogues with the names of the purchasers and the prices paid are acquired regularly, and are consulted more and more in tracing the provenance of copies of old books, or their probable owners. The rapid increase in the value of English books of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries has rendered it often worth while to verify their course through several auctions. A *List of Catalogues of English Book Sales, 1676-1900*, fully indexed, was published by the Museum in 1915.

While thus jotting down some of the results of his experience during forty years in the Library of the Museum, it occurred to the writer to look in Watts's *Bibliotheca Britannica* to see if there were any early books on research. The words search, research, documents, manuscripts, and several others gave no result, but at last under "Records" the following book was entered, and a copy was findable in the Library. It is entitled: "Direction for search of records remaining in the Chancerie, Tower, etc. For the clearing of all such titles and questions as the same may concerne. With the accustomed fees of search. By Thomas Powell, Londino-Cambrensis." It was published in 1622, at which date there were no public libraries in London, and even the Library at Lambeth Palace had only been in existence some twelve years. The quaint preface begins: "Books medicines and lawes should never be publisht or prescribed but as obiters, to meet with evils imminent; ever applied and ever complying with the present necessitie.

"The necessitie of this subject complains itself in the multiplicitie of suits, their expenses and dependencies, which for want of their proper records are brought into the court in so many fractions that the judge (however painfull or learned soever) can hardly reduce

them into whole numbers. This therefore have I out of my collections of twentie years search of records composed by way of a kallender into a summarie Index of direction for that purpose."

On p. 10 are the following observations on the Chancery Records: "First you shall understand that there be some few grants which were never enrolled at all, which for the most part are notwithstanding enrolled in the Exchequer. Next note you shall lose your labour if you search in the chapele of the rolls for any grant from the King which passed the great seal but within four or five years last past. But in the meantime are either with the Riding Clerk, or else (if they be past him) they are in the office of the Petty Bagge."

The fees were certainly heavy if we consider the value of money at that date :

12*d.* for search of anything in the Index.

4*d.* for sight of anything called for.

8*d.* per sheet for copying.

2*s.* for the hand of the clerk to anything copied.

He ends up the section relating to Chancery records thus: "Out of the foresaid general rule I must except such things as are not in the kalender, the search whereof is very uncertain and intricate: for in those searches your fee must answer the clark's extraordinary pains, etc." The "etc." is his, and it is small wonder that the Court of Chancery became a byword for procrastination and hope deferred, and that our novelists used it so often as a tragic background.

In a later work, 1631, he speaks of the "Bags hanging on the walls," and adds, "Next the door on the left hand is a bag entitled Bagamanorum": a delightful word which suggests a limbo for its contents, the documents known as *Quere quid plus*.

It is evident that the path of the researcher in those days was indeed a hard one. But if the facilities are now incomparably greater, it must be remembered that the field of research is ever widening and the subjects are ever becoming more minute. Statements are not accepted on mere credibility, for the careful student insists on verification, mindful of Dryden's words :

“ Errors like straws upon the surface flow,  
He who would search for pearls must dive below.” <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The heading “Academies” is to be abolished in the new British Museum catalogue (see p. 79).



V

THE UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES

BY LUXMOORE NEWCOMBE

*Librarian, National Central Library  
late Librarian of University College, London*





## THE UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES

BY LUXMOORE NEWCOMBE

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I do not propose to deal with the history or organization of the British university libraries, but merely to give those practical details which may be of value to the research student. In order that these details may be readily accessible, the information is given in the form of a reference book rather than as a connected narrative. The value of the university libraries lies not so much in the number of books possessed by them, but rather in the great mass of research and reference material available. An endeavour is made in this chapter to show what some of that material is.

The amount of material available in the university and college libraries is enormous, as may be gathered from the following Table :—

Number of printed volumes and pamphlets	.	.	.	9,530,000
Number of MSS. of a date earlier than 1500	.	.	.	30,000
				<hr/>
			Tota	9,560,000
Incunabula— <i>i.e.</i> books printed before 1500 (included above)				15,250
English books printed before 1641 (included above)	.	.		50,700
Sets of periodicals (included above)	.	.	.	61,000
Current periodicals (included above)	.	.	.	33,000

The three largest areas are Oxford, with 2,520,000

volumes; Cambridge, with 1,790,000 volumes; and London, with 1,370,000 volumes.

The important part played by the library in a modern university is emphasized by the University Grants Committee in their Report of 3rd February 1921, in which they state:—

“The character and efficiency of a university may be gauged by its treatment of its central organ—the library. We regard the fullest provision for library maintenance as the primary and most vital need in the equipment of a university. An adequate library is not only the basis of all teaching and study: it is the essential condition of research, without which additions cannot be made to the sum of human knowledge. . . . It is essential to the well-being alike of the Arts and of Science, and there are few universities which would not make a great step forward in efficiency if ampler funds were available for its maintenance.”

It is a widespread belief that the only libraries available to the public are those municipal libraries which are supported out of local rates, and which are popularly known as “Public Libraries.” But it should be remembered that the university libraries are, and always have been, public libraries. Ever since their foundation—several centuries before “Public Libraries” were introduced—the two great English university libraries, the Bodleian and the Cambridge University Library, opened their doors to scholars from all parts of the world. The tradition thus set has been followed by all the other universities.

That does not mean that any reader has a right to expect a university library to furnish him with those books which his local public library, or any other library to which he may have access, could reasonably be

expected to supply. What it does mean is that any student who can produce a satisfactory reference, and evidence that he cannot obtain the material he requires elsewhere, will be given the fullest possible assistance in almost any university library, either with or without the payment of a small fee. In most cases this means that the reader will have to go to the library to consult the book, though in very exceptional cases the book may be issued on loan.

It is a moot point whether the loan of a book to a person who has no connexion with the university is altogether desirable. If the book is one—say a scientific periodical—which may be wanted for quick reference by some member of the university who is conducting an experiment, or who may require it in connexion with his teaching or research work, it is a serious matter if that book cannot be produced at once. Then again one has to consider the risk of loss during transit. This risk is extraordinarily slight, but one cannot overlook the fact that it does exist, and it is doubtful whether a library is justified in taking this risk in the case of a unique printed document or a manuscript. The loss of, or serious damage to, a book in either of these classes would be an irreparable one. The many excellent and inexpensive methods of photographic reproduction now available reduce the necessity for taking transit risks with unique documents, and it is probable that at no very distant date no large library will be considered complete without a well-equipped department capable of producing copies of any documents which may be required by students who are unable to use them in the library. Already several university libraries provide such facilities.

There are, however, many books which are not irreplaceable or in constant use, and which are

likely to remain untouched on the shelves simply because no member of that particular library happens to be working on the subject covered by them. These are often just the books which are essential to the specialist or research student, and the power of being able to borrow such documents is of the utmost value.

Within the last few years a good deal has been attempted—and achieved—in the way of library co-operation. Perhaps the most important movement in this direction is a scheme for the loan of scarce books from one university library to another. This movement was inaugurated by the Association of University Teachers, the members of which body realized the need of some means of tracing—and when traced, obtaining—scarce books which they might urgently require in connexion with their research work. A committee, consisting of university teachers and librarians, and known as the Joint Standing Committee on Library Co-operation, has been appointed to organize and extend the movement. Practically all the university libraries in Great Britain are interested in the movement, and most of them have reaped some benefit from it. Several non-university libraries have also taken an active interest, and the Committee hope that before long all libraries—other than those national or semi-national libraries which, rightly, do not allow the borrowing of books—that contain any material of value to the research student will co-operate in the movement. The conditions under which the loan of books may be granted have been framed with a view to giving the lending library absolute discretion in deciding whether or not the book may be borrowed.

The conditions of loan are :

- (1) All loans to be made from library to library.

(2) Publications borrowed not to be used outside the borrowing library, except with the special permission in each case of the lending library.

(3) The borrowing library to pay the cost of transportation both ways, and to accept complete responsibility for the publications borrowed.

(4) Each publication to be borrowed for a restricted period only, at the discretion of the lending library.

(5) Certain categories of publications to be excluded from the operation of the scheme, e.g. :

(a) Books of reference and other books in constant demand.

(b) Books and periodicals which should be in the possession of every university library.

(c) Current text-books and manuals.

(d) Such publications as the library applied to may be unwilling to lend owing to their rarity or value, or for some other particular reason.

It will be seen from the above schedule that the inter-loan movement is not intended for the exchange of modern text-books or of those periodicals which should be in every university library, but only for the scarce—not necessarily old or expensive—books which it is impossible to consult in any other way. Perhaps the most valuable side of the work is the locating of books which could not otherwise be traced. The work of the Inquiry Office which has been established in Birmingham, although still in its infancy, has resulted in the tracing of a high percentage of the books asked for. In almost every case the book, when found, has been lent to the library to which the seeker has access. Loans under this scheme are not made to individuals, but only to the librarian of the individual's library. This is of the utmost importance as a safeguard against the loss or damage of the volume. Any person anxious to take

advantage of the facilities offered by the movement should write to Mr. L. T. Oldaker, the University Library, Edmund Street, Birmingham.

Another body which is likely to be of considerable value is the Association of Special Libraries and Information Bureaux. The object of this association is to facilitate the use and co-ordination of all sources of information for scientific, technical, commercial, and public purposes :

(1) Through the agency of special libraries and information bureaux by tabulation of existing agencies (e.g. national, municipal, and association libraries ; economic, industrial, commercial, and other bureaux providing information and research services), and by the exploration of channels for mutual co-operation and reciprocal interchange of non-confidential information and experience.

(2) By development of common objects and new services ; e.g. (a) Indexing sources of statistical and other data. (b) Co-ordination of abstracting services for scientific and technical societies, so that overlapping may be avoided. (c) Improvement of availability and distribution of periodical and other literature—particularly from foreign sources—in national and local centres. (d) Registration of classified panels of translators for the service of particular industries, sciences, and arts. (e) Increase of provision of photographic and other copying apparatus.

(3) By establishing a focus point for all institutions and individuals able to assist in making fact-information available to those who require it in manifold branches of national and industrial activities and public affairs.

Anyone interested in this work should communicate with Mr. S. S. Bullock, Organising Secretary, A.S.L.I.B., 26 Bedford Square, London, W.C.1. (Telephone : Fitzroy 1010.)

A library that should be able to do an immense amount to help the university libraries when it is more fully developed is the National Central Library, formerly known as the Central Library for Students. In addition to lending books from its own stock, this library acts as a clearing-house for the inter-loan of scarce books between one library and another. Nearly one hundred libraries are associated with the National Central Library in its work. These libraries are known as Outlier Libraries. They undertake to lend their books to other libraries (not themselves necessarily Outlier Libraries) through the agency of the National Central Library. The total stock of books in the Outlier Libraries is over 4,000,000 volumes, including some 25,000 sets of periodicals. These volumes cover all subjects. Already many university students and research workers have found this service of great value, but when the system is more fully developed it should be the means of providing for scholars many books and periodicals which they are now unable to obtain.

The National Central Library now receives an annual grant from the National Exchequer to enable it (*a*) to establish an information department, (*b*) to compile a union catalogue of the Outlier Libraries, and (*c*) to extend the Outlier Library system. It will be the function of the information department to trace the whereabouts of books required, and, if possible, arrange for their loan, and generally to assist scholars by giving information about special collections of books. It will act as the National Centre for Bibliographical Information for Great Britain in connexion with the International Institute of Intellectual Co-operation. The object of this scheme is to facilitate the lending of books between foreign libraries. The Inquiry Office of the Association of University Teachers described on pages 96-98 will be

amalgamated with the information department of the National Central Library in the near future.

Applications for books or information must not be sent direct to the National Central Library, but through the librarian of the university or other library with which the reader is associated. The address of the Library is Galen Place, Bury Street, London, W.C.1.

University libraries now offer facilities for research which were undreamt of a generation or two ago. In the old days it was the recognized practice in many university libraries—and most other libraries for that matter—to put every possible barrier between the student and the book. The librarian's only duty appeared to be to see that the books remained untouched in their carefully locked cases. His catalogue was often inaccurate and incomplete, and he made no attempt to assist his students in finding the books which would be helpful to them. Nowadays, fortunately, all that has changed.

One of the most valuable reforms was the formation at University College, London, by Professor R. W. Chambers, a former librarian, of the first properly organized system of special or seminar libraries in any English university. These special libraries must not be confused with the departmental libraries which existed in several universities long before 1901. A departmental library is a collection of books—usually a small one—which is housed in a department for the use of the staff and students working in that department. The collection may or may not form part of the university library. A special library, on the other hand, is an integral part of the library. It is a special room which is set aside to house the books dealing with a certain subject. It does not necessarily contain all the books in the library dealing with that particular subject, but only those to



which it is necessary for the student to have direct access.

Let me illustrate the working of a special library by an example at University College. I will take the English Library. All students of the College who are taking an honours course in English, as well as research students in that subject, are given keys which admit them to the English Library. In this library they find the books and periodicals they need in connexion with their work. They have direct access to all these books, most of which may be borrowed for home reading. There is a catalogue in the Library, and the books are arranged in order of subject so that a student working on a particular subject or period finds all his material in one place. The special library has advantages other than those afforded by access to the books. It enables the teacher to hold certain of his classes in the library, where he is able to use the books to which he refers in his lecture. In this way the student is taught how to make the best use of the books on his subject, and which book, or class of books, will give him any particular information he may want. In the special library the student is working with all the other students taking the same subject. They can discuss, and, with the aid of the books, solve their difficulties and problems. This practical training in the proper use of a library is invaluable.

The provision of periodical publications (journals, transactions of societies, etc.)—the only means of keeping abreast of the progress made in any subject—is one of the main functions of a modern university library. The result is that between them the universities have a very large number of different periodicals. Many of these represent the only copies in the country.

The tracing of scientific periodicals has been simplified by the recent publication of the *World List of Scientific*

*Periodicals published in the years 1900-1921* (2 vols., Oxford University Press, £3 10s.), which contains the titles of 24,028 periodicals, with a note of the libraries, if any, in Great Britain and Ireland which contain a copy. The Joint Standing Committee on Library Co-operation are now compiling a similar list for non-scientific periodicals in the university libraries. The list will not be ready for publication for another year or two. In the meantime the entries are being filed at the National Central Library, where they form a valuable tool for the tracing of periodicals.

The list on the following pages gives some of the more important special collections which are likely to be of use to the research student. Lack of space has necessitated the exclusion of more detailed information.<sup>1</sup>

## LIST OF COLLECTIONS OF BOOKS AND MATERIAL OF SPECIAL VALUE TO RESEARCH STUDENTS

### ABERDEEN UNIVERSITY

(1) A large collection of books and pamphlets relating to or published in Aberdeen, Banff, Caithness, Inverness, Kincardine, Moray, Nairn, Ross and Cromarty, Sutherland, Orkney and Shetland. (2) A large collection of books on classical archæology. (3) The Dey-Masson collection of Celtic literature. (4) The Macbean collection of Jacobite material, consisting of books, pamphlets, broadsides, MSS., prints, etc. (5) The Phillips pharmacological collection. (6) The Taylor psalmody collection.

<sup>1</sup> Full details of some 300 university and college libraries will be found in *The University and College Libraries of Great Britain and Ireland*, by the author of this chapter, published in 1927.

BANGOR, UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF NORTH WALES

Welsh (15,000 vols.), including the largest collection of Welsh periodicals in existence.

#### BIRMINGHAM UNIVERSITY

(1) The Bunce collection, containing a number of books on art. (2) The Corbett collection of county, especially Shropshire, history. (3) The Hensleigh Wedgwood collection, mainly philology. (4) The Sargent collection, specially useful for French economic literature from 1830 to 1850. (5) A large collection of pamphlets on Algæ. (6) A considerable number of works by, and about, Grillparzer.

#### BRISTOL UNIVERSITY

(1) The Wigglesworth ornithology collection. (2) Japan collection, including texts in Japanese. (3) Old medical books. (4) The Beddoes anthropology collection. (5) The Exley mathematics collection.

#### CAMBRIDGE, ARTS SCHOOL

(1) The Seeley library of works on history and comparative politics. (2) The Beit German research library. (3) The Bendall Sanskrit library.

#### CAMBRIDGE, BALFOUR LIBRARY

(1) The Canon Norman collection of pamphlets and books on systematic zoology. (2) The F. Balfour and the A. Sedgwick collections of pamphlets and books on embryology. (3) The Doncaster cytology collection. (4) The Andrews palæontology collection.

#### CAMBRIDGE, CHRIST'S COLLEGE

The Robertson Smith Oriental collection, containing many rare books dealing with Semitic literature and kindred subjects.

## CAMBRIDGE, CORPUS CHRISTI COLLEGE

The MSS. fall under three main headings: (1) The collection of Chronicles of English history, including the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, the Matthew Paris Chronicle, and many others. (2) An unique collection of Anglo-Saxon MSS. (3) Liturgical works of all kinds.

## CAMBRIDGE, GIRTON COLLEGE

(1) The Blackburn collection of books, pamphlets, and periodicals dealing with the women's movement. (2) The Mary Frere collection of Hebrew and Samaritan books. (3) The Ethel Sargent collection of books on botany. (4) The Cowell collection of books on Oriental languages.

## CAMBRIDGE, GONVILLE AND CAIUS COLLEGE

(1) Dr. Branthwaite, Master of the College, and one of the Bible Revisers of 1611, bequeathed his entire library, which has been kept as a special collection. It is rich in controversial theology of the sixteenth century, but is interesting also as showing what was contained in the library of a well-to-do scholar of the period. It contains 1,300 books and pamphlets. (2) The College makes a speciality of Norfolk and Suffolk topographical and genealogical printed books, as its founders were all East-Anglians, and its property is in East Anglia. (3) Among the MSS. are Dr. John Knight's genealogical and heraldic books, bequeathed in 1680, consisting of sixty-five volumes and various loose papers.

## CAMBRIDGE, KING'S COLLEGE

(1) A valuable collection of works on natural history, sixteenth to eighteenth centuries. (2) The Headlam collection of books on Æschylus.

## CAMBRIDGE, MARSHALL LIBRARY OF ECONOMICS

(1) A collection of seventeenth and eighteenth century economic pamphlets. (2) A valuable collection of pamphlets dealing with the Bullionist and Bank Act controversies (about 1820-45).

## CAMBRIDGE, PEMBROKE COLLEGE

(1) One hundred and twenty MSS. from Bury St. Edmunds. (2) Aristophanes. (3) A good series of bindings.

## CAMBRIDGE, PETERHOUSE

The A. W. Ward library ; chiefly history and dramatic literature.

## CAMBRIDGE, ST. CATHARINE'S COLLEGE

The Addenbrooke collection of seventeenth and eighteenth century medical books.

## CAMBRIDGE, ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE

(1) The Southampton collection of MSS. and printed books up to 1630. (2) The Baker collection of MSS. and printed books up to 1700. (3) The Otway collection of pamphlets from 1660 to 1710. (4) The Samuel Butler collection. (5) The W. F. Smith collection of Rabelais literature.

## CAMBRIDGE, TRINITY COLLEGE

(1) The Capell Shakespeariana collection. (2) The Pollock Dante collection. (3) The Aldis Wright Hebrew printed books.

## CAMBRIDGE, UNION SOCIETY

(1) The Erskine Allon music collection. (2) The Edmund Garret collection of books on the British Colonies.

## CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY

(1) Acton historical library. (2) Adams collection of early printed books. (3) Adversaria, printed books with manuscript notes. (4) Madden collection of sheet ballads. (5) Bensley collection of Oriental literature. (6) The collection of Dante books. (7) Cambridge collection. (8) Wade collection of Chinese books. (9) Gibb collection of Turkish books. (10) Bradshaw collection of Irish books, which is specially rich in seventeenth century tracts. (11) Aston collection of Japanese books. (12) Pryme collection, political economy. (13) Ritschl collection of classical pamphlets. (14) A comprehensive collection of Prynne's tracts. (15) A collection of books by and on Erasmus. (16) A collection of caricatures issued in Paris during 1870-71. (17) Eight volumes of newspaper-cuttings of 1878 relating to the death and career of Pius IX. (18) A series of telegrams received during the Franco-German War. (19) A complete set of Parliamentary Papers from 1715 to date. (20) An extensive collection of private Acts ranging from 1 George II to 1 William IV, 1727-1830. (21) Sandars collection of manuscripts and choice books. (22) Spanish books. (23) Thomason collection of Hebrew books. (24) Taylor-Schechter collection of Hebrew documents and manuscripts from the Genizah at Old Cairo. (25) Venn collection of books on logic. (26) Johns collection of Assyriological books. (27) War collection. (28) The map collection includes a specially fine series of old British county maps.

## CARDIFF, UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH WALES

Salisbury collection of Welsh books.

## CORK, UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

The D'Arbois Jubainville collection of Celtic books.

## DUBLIN, TRINITY COLLEGE

(1) About 200 MSS. in the Irish language. (2) The Quin collection of Editiones Principes of the classics. (3) The Fagel library contains pamphlets on the Dutch and English East and West India Companies, also important maps.

## DUBLIN, UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

The Zimmer Celtic collection.

## DUNDEE, UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

(1) A few old books on botany. (2) A few early books on medicine.

## DURHAM UNIVERSITY

(1) The Routh collection of political and religious tracts (1582-1750). (2) A fairly full collection of maps of the county and city of Durham from 1576, and local prints and drawings. (3) Books on local history.

## EDINBURGH NEW (UNITED FREE CHURCH) COLLEGE

(1) Ian Keith Falconer Arabic collection. (2) The library is rich in seventeenth and eighteenth century pamphlets.

## EDINBURGH UNIVERSITY

(1) The Clement Lital collection of some 300 volumes, chiefly on theology and law, bequeathed by Clement Lital in 1580. A list of these books is printed in the *Miscellany of the Maitland Club*, vol. i, 1834. (2) The Drummond collection of some 500 volumes presented by William Drummond of Hawthornden in 1626, and subsequently; mainly literary. A catalogue of the original collection was published by Principal J. Adamson in 1627, and a facsimile reprint of this was issued in 1815 by David Laing. (3) The Halliwell-Phillipps

collection of about 1,000 volumes, mainly Shakespearian. It contains a number of the early Shakespeare quartos. (4) The Cameron collection of about 3,500 volumes, chiefly Celtic, but containing a considerable amount of miscellaneous literature. (5) The Blackie collection of modern Greek books and pamphlets (some 250 volumes in all). (6) The Forbes collection of about 200 books on the Philippine Islands. (7) The Bruce collection of some 1,000 volumes and between 2,000 and 3,000 pamphlets, mostly on oceanographical subjects. (8) The Mackinnon collection of about 1,700 volumes, mainly on Celtic subjects. (9) The Abercromby collection of some 2,500 volumes on archæology, ethnology, etc. (10) An extensive collection of Lutheran and Reformation tracts (upwards of 1,500). (11) The Laing Charters, a set of upwards of 3,300 parchment charters (A.D. 854-1837). A calendar of these charters was issued in 1899. (12) The Laing Manuscripts, chiefly of historical interest, though there is much miscellaneous material among them. Those of a date prior to 1500 are dealt with in the *Descriptive Catalogue of the Western Mediæval Manuscripts in Edinburgh University Library* (1916); a report of the later historical documents is being issued by the Historical Manuscripts Commission, the first volume having been published in 1914.

#### GLASGOW, UNITED FREE CHURCH COLLEGE

(1) The Mearns hymnological collection, containing about 3,000 volumes. (2) The Ross Celtic collection, containing books on Gaelic, Irish, and Welsh literature.

#### GLASGOW UNIVERSITY

(1) The Euing collection of over 15,000 volumes, including some early MSS. and many early printed books. (2) The Euing collection of 408 Black-letter



ballads. (3) The Euing collection of over 2,000 Bibles, the most complete in Scotland. (4) The Hamilton collection, consisting of over 8,000 volumes and including many important first editions of classics and works on philosophy and some early MSS. (5) The Hunterian MSS., 649 in number. (6) The Hunterian printed books, over 9,300, many of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, including early editions of Latin and Greek authors and early books on science and medicine. (7) The Ferguson collection of books on the history of chemistry, including witchcraft and alchemy. (8) The M'Callum Celtic collection. (9) The M'Grigor collection of books on Palestine, consisting of 655 volumes, illustrating the history, topography, and antiquities of Jerusalem and the Holy Land. (10) The Robertson theological collection. (11) The Stillie music library. (12) The Veitch collection of 600 volumes relating to mediæval philosophy. (13) The Wylie collection of 984 volumes of chap-books, directories, and works dealing with the history and antiquities of Glasgow. (14) The Divinity Hall Library contains 8,000 volumes of theological works.

#### HARPENDEN, ROTHAMSTED EXPERIMENTAL STATION

(1) A growing collection of early books on agriculture, English and foreign, from 1471 onwards. (2) Prints of cattle. (3) Lawes and Gilbert manuscripts.

#### LEEDS UNIVERSITY

(1) A fourteenth century Anglo-Norman MS. of William of Waddington's *Manuel des Pechiez*. (2) A volume containing over 150 MS. and printed documents relating to Spanish and American history, mostly printed at Lima, between 1627 and 1634. (3) Letters, accounts, and notebooks of the firm of Benjamin Gott and Sons, illustrating developments in the textile industry in the

beginning of the nineteenth century. (4) A collection of letters about the Broad Cloth Act of 1740. (5) The Denison Roebuck collection of English postage stamps, including a great many early deeds. (6) Books printed before the nineteenth century containing (a) translations from English into French, (b) books in French on English affairs. The object of this collection, at present containing 840 volumes, is to illustrate the contemporary influence of England upon France. (7) A collection of 300 volumes dealing with events in France during 1870 and 1871. It includes a set of the *Journal Officiel*, and newspapers issued in Metz, Strasbourg, and Nancy. (8) A collection of 136 Civil War tracts, dealing more particularly with Yorkshire and the activities of the Fairfaxes. (9) Special collections relating to Hegel, Rousseau, and Wagner. (10) The Melsted Icelandic collection.

#### LIVERPOOL UNIVERSITY

(1) The Rylands collection of early works on geography and astronomy. (2) A collection of works by and about William Blake. (3) The Noble collection of modern presses and éditions de luxe. (4) The Campbell Brown collection of works on alchemy and early science.

#### LONDON, BEDFORD COLLEGE FOR WOMEN

A small collection on the status and work of women.

#### LONDON, EAST LONDON COLLEGE

The English section of the library is rich in Shakespearean literature and source books.

#### LONDON, GUY'S HOSPITAL MEDICAL SCHOOL

(1) Collection of books by Guy's men. (2) Several maps of Southwark and district. (3) The Library of the Physical Society.

## LONDON, INSTITUTE OF HISTORICAL RESEARCH

(1) Czecho-Slovak history. (2) Treaties. (3) Parliamentary proceedings, France and Italy, from 1789. (4) French "Livres Jaunes." (5) Military history, especially military periodicals. (6) Complete set of British Government historical publications, also those of the Dominions, Colonies, and India; the U.S.A. Germany, and Holland. (7) Canadian history. (8) American history (Manton Marble collection of early Government reports, etc.).

## LONDON, KING'S COLLEGE

(1) The Marsden Library, containing unique and rare editions of works dealing with different languages. (2) The Wheatstone collection of books on electricity and kindred subjects up to 1875. (3) The Slavonic Library, containing books dealing with Russian and other Slavonic languages. The Slavonic Library is housed at the Institute of Historical Research, Malet Street, W.C.1. (4) The Mediæval and Modern Greek Library dealing with Byzantine history and the language and literature of modern Greek. (5) The Frida Mond collection of books dealing with German literature is particularly rich in editions and translations of Goethe's works.

## LONDON, LONDON HOSPITAL MEDICAL COLLEGE

The Thompson Yates Research Library, containing the chief periodicals dealing with anatomy, physiology, pathology, and allied subjects.

## LONDON, LONDON SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS

(1) The Cobden Library of international commerce and peace. (2) The Acworth collection on transport.

- (3) The Edward Fry Library of international law.
- (4) The Schuster Library of comparative legislation.
- (5) The Hutchinson collection of works for, against, and about socialism.
- (6) Official Reports on the municipal administration of 300 municipalities in the United Kingdom, British Colonies, Europe, and the United States.
- (7) Parliamentary and official publications of British Dominions and Colonies and all foreign countries.
- (8) A large collection of books, pamphlets, etc., relating to the tobacco industry of England in the seventeenth century.

LONDON, MIDDLESEX HOSPITAL MEDICAL SCHOOL  
Cancer research library.

#### LONDON, REGENT'S PARK COLLEGE

- (1) The Angus collection of MSS., of importance for the early history of the English Baptists.
- (2) The Angus collection of Baptist authors.

#### LONDON, ROYAL ARMY MEDICAL COLLEGE

- (1) Many early books on medicine, surgery, and anatomy.
- (2) Some early herbals.
- (3) Several early books of general interest.

#### LONDON, ROYAL COLLEGE OF MUSIC

- (1) Several sets of madrigals and ayres by English and foreign composers in original editions of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.
- (2) English and Italian operas (full scores).
- (3) History of music and musical instruments.
- (4) The lives of musicians.
- (5) Modern printed full scores and complete works of the great composers.
- (6) Many MS. autograph scores of the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries.

## LONDON, ST. GEORGE'S HOSPITAL MEDICAL SCHOOL

(1) A small collection of MS. lectures by famous surgeons and physicians, including Benjamin Brodie, George Fordych, John and William Hunter, W. V. Pettigrew, Percival Potts. (2) A small collection of early printed medical books.

## LONDON, ST. JOHN'S HALL

(1) Many original sources for the history of the English Church and the Book of Common Prayer. (2) A large collection of German and Dutch theological works of the eighteenth century. (3) Elizabethan and early Stuart theological works.

## LONDON, SCHOOL OF ORIENTAL STUDIES

(1) The Marsden collection of Oriental MSS. (2) The Morrison Chinese Library.

## LONDON, SCHOOL OF PHARMACY

(Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain).

(1) The Daniel Hanbury collection of early books. (2) A complete series of the London Pharmacopœias. (3) All the foreign Pharmacopœias. (4) Many old English herbals.

## LONDON, TROPICAL DISEASES LIBRARY

(1) The Library is rich in periodicals from out-of-the-way tropical countries, also in government medical and sanitary reports from British tropical colonies. Several of the periodicals are not available anywhere else in London. (2) There is a large collection of reprints (about 11,000) from periodicals dealing with the subjects covered by the library.

## LONDON UNIVERSITY

The most valuable section of the University Library is the Goldsmiths' Company's Library of Economic

Literature (50,000 vols.). This collection is intended to serve as a basis for the study of the industrial, commercial, monetary, and financial history of the United Kingdom, as well as the gradual development of economic science generally. The history of economic thought is represented by a collection of books which is practically complete in so far as England is concerned, and fairly comprehensive in respect of the French economists before and during the Revolution. There is also a representative collection of the works of American economists and a fair representation of economic thought in Italy, Spain, Germany, and Holland. The Goldsmiths' Library is one of the finest economic libraries in the world.

Other collections of special importance are : (1) The De Morgan library of about 4,000 mathematical and astronomical books, formerly belonging to Augustus De Morgan, including several incunabula and early English books, and many other rare books, most of which are full of bibliographical notes and marginal annotations by De Morgan. (2) The George Grote Library of about 5,000 volumes of Latin and Greek classics and books on history. (3) The Shaw-Lefevre Russian Library, which contains many rarities. (4) An important reference section of bibliographies, the function of which is to furnish the specialist with information as to the range of the subject-matter with which he has to deal. (5) The theses presented by successful candidates for the higher degrees of the University are deposited in the Library, and are available for public reference. (6) The music library, containing music scores and books on music, as well as a collection of gramophone records and pianola rolls.

#### LONDON, UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

(1) Twenty-seven German manuscripts, dating from the twelfth to the fifteenth centuries. (2) Twenty-

seven books from the press of Erhard Ratdolt, 1476-91. (3) The Dante collection is one of exceptional completeness. It includes editions of Dante and works on Dante, from 1477 onwards. (4) The Herbert Thompson collection of editions of Castiglione's *Courtier*. (5) The Graves mathematical library of 10,000 volumes and 4,500 pamphlets. This collection of mathematical, astronomical, and physical books is of immense value to the student in the history of mathematics. It includes several early manuscripts, many incunabula, and a number of books believed to be unique. (6) The Whitley Stokes Celtic Library. (7) The Mocatta, Gollancz, and Abrahams collections of Hebrew books and works dealing with the history of the Jews. These collections are especially rich in early works on the history of the Jews in England. (8) The Daulby-Roscoe Icelandic collection. (9) The Carnegie collection of books on the history, government, institutions, and literature of the United States of America. (10) The original manuscripts of Jeremy Bentham, consisting largely of unpublished works. (11) The Fine Art section includes many original drawings by the Old Masters, and a large collection of rare engravings and prints. (12) The English library is particularly strong in facsimiles and reprints. (13) The library contains an exceptionally large number of works on bibliography and on palæography. (14) A large collection of valuable tracts, including the Marquess of Lansdowne, or Shelburne, political and historical pamphlets, 1589-1780 (2,450 items); the Earl of Halifax's historical pamphlets, 1600-1749 (3,582 items); the Reed political pamphlets, 1699-1796 (721 items); the Joseph Hume political and statistical pamphlets, 1810-1850 (*c.* 5,000 items); several thousand pamphlets illustrating the history of the French Revolution; and many pamphlets on the Low

Countries in 1787-92. (15) The library is exceptionally strong in its complete sets of periodicals, covering nearly all subjects in arts, sciences, medical sciences, law, and engineering. Some of these sets go back to the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.

Each of the special libraries is strong in its own subject. The special libraries are: Architecture, Archæology (classical), Classics and ancient history, Egyptology, English, French, German, Scandinavian, History, London History, Law, Philosophy and psychology, Phonetics, Librarianship, Science, Medical sciences, History of medicine. The libraries of the following societies are housed in the College Library and are available for reference: Bibliographical Society, British Association for the Advancement of Science, Folklore Society, Geologists' Association, Library Association, Philological Society.

#### LONDON, UNIVERSITY COLLEGE HOSPITAL MEDICAL SCHOOL

(1) The Radcliffe-Crocker collection of dermatological works, including his original coloured drawings of skin diseases. (2) The Graham Research Library of books and periodicals on medical research subjects. (3) The Sir John Tweedy Collection of early medical and surgical books. (4) The Library also contains many early books on anatomy, medicine, and surgery.

#### LONDON, WESLEYAN COLLEGE

(1) A collection of books owned by John and Charles Wesley. (2) A collection of pamphlets, from 1600 to 1850, on theological and political controversy. (3) The Library is strong in comparative religion, especially as regards India and the East.



## LONDON, WESTFIELD COLLEGE

(1) Algæ. (2) Icelandic.

## MANCHESTER UNIVERSITY

(1) The Christie collection of over 8,000 volumes, including some 800 volumes of works by, or relating to Horace, a large number of books dealing with the Renaissance, many early printed books, and a collection of volumes emanating from the printing presses at Lyons. (2) The Prince Lee collection, especially rich in theology and history, containing also a series of engravings, drawings, photographs, etc., illustrative of the diocese of Manchester. (3) The E. A. Freeman collection, comprising over 7,000 historical books. (4) The Finlayson collection of over 4,000 volumes, relating chiefly to history, literature, and theology. (5) Amongst the smaller collections are the Forbes (science), the Theodores and the Robinson (Oriental), the Muirhead (Law), the Hagar (Greek law and Teutonic philology), the Marillier (comparative religion), the Jevons (economics), the Arnold (Roman history).

## NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE, ARMSTRONG COLLEGE

(1) English Bibles from 1535. (2) The Merz Library of philosophical and mathematical works. (3) The Spence Watson collection of early English texts. (4) The Heslop collection of English dictionaries. (5) The Kepier School Library of fifteenth to eighteenth century printed books, mostly classics.

## OXFORD, ALL SOULS' COLLEGE

(1) The Codrington specializes solely in modern history, law, and political science. (2) The Brand collection of books on political economy and science.

## OXFORD, BALLIOL COLLEGE

(1) A collection of medical tracts, many extremely rare, presented in the eighteenth century. (2) The Armitage collection of French and German literature; particularly rich in Provençal and Old French.

## OXFORD, BODLEIAN LIBRARY

(1) The Ashmole collection of English antiquities, heraldry, and astrology. (2) The Backhouse collection of Chinese books and MSS. (3) The Bywater collection of volumes on Aristotle and his commentators, and the Humanist scholars up to 1650. (4) The Carte collection of Irish State Papers. The seventeenth century papers in this collection are of enormous extent. (5) The Chandra Shum Shere collection of Sanskrit MSS. (6) The Clarendon collection of State Papers. (7) A large collection of dissertations. (8) The Douce collection of illuminated MSS. and early English literature. (9) The Gough collection of British topography and Saxon and Northern literature. (10) The Hope collection of old periodicals. (11) Lutheran tracts. (12) The Malone collection of early English poetry and English dramatic literature, including a large set of folios and quartos of Shakespeare's works. (13) The Munro Homeric collection. (14) The Mortara collection of Italian books. (15) The Nichols collection of newspapers, 1672-1737. (16) The Oppenheimer Hebrew books and MSS. (17) A long series of early English pamphlets, mainly seventeenth to nineteenth centuries. (18) The Rawlinson collection of seventeenth and eighteenth century literature. (19) The Rylands heraldic MSS. (20) The Shelley collection. (21) The Tanner collection of English literature. (22) The Toynbee Italian

collection. (23) The Wardrop collection of Georgian literature.

## OXFORD, CHRIST CHURCH COLLEGE

(1) Early Scandinavian collection. (2) Music collection.

## OXFORD, INDIAN INSTITUTE

(1) The Malan philological library. (2) The Monier-Williams Sanskrit Library. (3) The Whinfield collection of Persian books.

## OXFORD, LINCOLN COLLEGE

(1) A collection of seventeenth and eighteenth century plays and pamphlets. (2) A collection of Hebrew and Aramaic works of the late seventeenth century.

## OXFORD, MAGDALEN COLLEGE

(1) The Gervans mathematical library. (2) The Goodyear botanical library.

## OXFORD, NETTLESHIP LIBRARY

The Geldart law library.

## OXFORD, NEW COLLEGE

(1) Early printed editions of the classics. (2) Early books on Roman law, theology, and medicine.

## OXFORD, ORIEL COLLEGE

(1) The Leigh collection of eighteenth century music. (2) The Church collection of mediæval history. (3) The Monro collection of comparative philology and mythology.

## OXFORD, PEMBROKE COLLEGE

(1) Mediæval medical MSS. (2) Samuel Johnson MSS. (3) The Chandler library of Aristotelian and other philosophical literature. (4) The Birkbeck Hill collection of Johnsoniana and eighteenth century literature.

## OXFORD, ST. EDMUND HALL

(1) Hearniana. (2) A small collection of seventeenth century mystical theology. (3) Miscellaneous seventeenth and early eighteenth century pamphlets probably collected by Bishop White Kennett.

## OXFORD, SCHOOL OF GEOGRAPHY

(1) Nearly 15,000 maps. (2) A large collection of blue books and statistical works, mainly dealing with the British Empire.

## OXFORD, SOMERVILLE COLLEGE

The John Stuart Mill collection.

## OXFORD, TAYLOR INSTITUTION

(1) Dante. (2) Goethe. (3) Luther. (4) Dictionaries. (5) Czecho-Slovak books.

## OXFORD, UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

(1) A collection of seventeenth century tracts and other controversial literature on religious topics. (2) A collection of books dealing with the discovery and early history of America.

## OXFORD, WADHAM COLLEGE

(1) Early medical works. (2) Warner collection of English literature. (3) Godolphin collection of Spanish books, mainly theology.

## OXFORD, WORCESTER COLLEGE

(1) Seventeenth century MSS. and pamphlets dealing with the civil wars. (2) Books on architecture, and architectural and other drawings by Inigo Jones and Webb. (3) A collection of early seventeenth and eighteenth century literature. (4) A collection of early plays.

## READING UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

(1) A collection of 283 MS. deeds, mostly sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, being the family papers of the Englefields of Englefield, Berks. These documents relate to about twenty English counties. (2) The Overstone Library of belles lettres, a group of theological and philosophical writings of the eighteenth century, a section of general topography, and about 1,000 volumes and tracts on political economy before 1850. (3) A collection of 7,500 pamphlets on agriculture.

## ST. ANDREW'S UNIVERSITY

(1) Bible collection. (2) A large collection of English and foreign sixteenth century printed books. (3) Manuscripts, particularly Eastern. (4) McKay mathematical collection. (5) Sir James Donaldson Library, strong in theology and classics. (6) The Muniment collection. (7) The George Buchanan collection, one of the most representative collections in existence. (8) The Crombie Library, mainly theology. (9) The Royal collection, Stuart books. (10) The Baron von Hügel collection, mainly philosophy. (11) The St. Andrews collection. (12) The Principal Forbes Library, strong in early and rare science works.

## SHEFFIELD UNIVERSITY

(1) The Parker collection of books on alchemy and the early history of chemistry. (2) A large collection of facsimiles of papyri, mainly Greek. (3) The Watson collection of literature bearing upon Polychæte worms, which is almost unique in its completeness.

## SOUTHAMPTON, UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

(1) Cope collection of Hampshire books. (2) A collection of Hampshire maps.

## SWANSEA, UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

The Powel Welsh library.

## WYE, SOUTH-EASTERN AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE

(1) The principal old agricultural books. (2) Reports on agricultural research in British Empire, U.S.A., and Europe.

# VI

## SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL LIBRARIES

BY ALLAN GOMME

*Librarian H.M. Patent Office Library*





## SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL LIBRARIES

BY ALLAN GOMME

*Librarian H.M. Patent Office Library*

THE need for the systematic collection and organization of recorded scientific knowledge from all parts of the world in a community such as that of England, which is dependent for its very existence on the prosperity of its industries, would appear to require little in the way of justification. The truth is, however, that this country is only just beginning to perceive the vital importance of scientific research to industry, and the necessity for an accurate knowledge of what is being done from day to day in the various branches of science and technology. The fact and an explanation of it has been well expressed by Mr. A. J. Balfour (as he then was) at a Conference of Research Associations. "I think we are apt to forget," he said,<sup>1</sup> "how recent is the recognition by the general public of the truism that the industrial progress of mankind is going to be in the future more and more dependent upon the alliance of science and industry, and upon the co-operation of different branches of science with each other. I do not know when it can be said to have really first begun, . . . but apart from details and apart from the minute happenings of history,

<sup>1</sup> Report of Second Conference of Research Organizations, 12 December, 1919. Department of Scientific and Industrial Research. H.M.S.O., 1920.

what I think is certainly true is this—that the great industrial development in which Great Britain led the way towards the end of the eighteenth century, which gave us a manufacturing supremacy over all the world which it is certainly impossible and probably not wholly desirable that we should ever regain, was not in the main due to anything which pure science contributed to industry. I believe that it is partly owing to that, that the great industrial community of this country, whose succession with their forefathers has been uninterrupted, have not got, as it were, into the tissue of their thoughts the idea that science is now in these days an essential element in industrial progress. The Germans, whose industrial development came much later, have always taken a different view. I do not think that they have shown any greater aptitude for science than our own fellow-countrymen; but beginning as they did rather late in the day with that view which they have always entertained of the close alliance that ought to exist between knowledge and power, they naturally and easily did what we with more difficulty and at a later date are beginning to do.”

It is to-day quite clear that if Great Britain is to maintain its industrial position in the world, we must follow the example of the Germans and proceed at once energetically to organize the whole of our resources, industrial, experimental, and literary, for the furtherance of scientific research. It is mainly for that reason, it may be surmised, that it has been decided to allot a special chapter in this book to the subject of scientific and technical libraries, for these form one of the essential tools of the research worker, providing him as they should do, with easy and expeditious access to the recorded experience of the world in whatever branch of science he may be working, and enabling him to take full

advantage of the successes and the equally important failures of his predecessors in that particular field.

It may be stated at once, however, that a great deal of what has been said elsewhere in this volume on the uses of libraries in general will apply equally well to the science and technical library, and must be read as so applying. The general organization and routine are much the same for all; they all obey the same fundamental rules of classification and cataloguing, and use the same bibliographical tools. The great national bibliographies—*The English Catalogue*, the *Deutsches Bücherverzeichniss*, *The United States Catalogue*, the *Bibliographie de la France*, the *Bollettino delle Pubblicazioni Italiane*, the *Bibliographie de Belgique*, and so on, are of course necessities in any library, and together with encyclopædias, national and polyglot dictionaries, biographies, indexes and abstracts to periodical literature, year-books, and other similar standard works of reference, form the basis of any collection which is organized for intelligent use. And though some of these—especially dictionaries and bibliographies—acquire perhaps a distinctive importance in the special library, and may require fuller treatment here, it will not be necessary to speak of them in general terms.

Before some of the needs of a special library are discussed in detail, it may be instructive to glance at its historical development in this country, and to examine our existing resources, for such a digression will show that although industries have hitherto progressed mainly under a system of trial and error, and manufacturers and public alike have been slow to appreciate the importance of science to the needs of the community, yet English scientific men themselves—from Roger Bacon downwards through the centuries—have been amongst the foremost in recognizing the value of experimental

research, and have from early times collected scientific and technical records which put the library catalogues of this country among the richest in the world.

The necessity for co-operative effort and for periodical opportunities of meeting together for the purpose of comparing notes and discussing new ideas was seen at an early date by English scientists, and was the immediate cause of the initiation of that long line of learned and scientific societies which, few in number to start with, have rapidly multiplied until they are now almost bewilderingly numerous, covering every branch of knowledge. These societies come into the story because, at the commencement of or early in their history, most of them formed libraries, many of which exist to-day and, indeed, account for almost the whole of the scientific library system of the country. The oldest and the most famous of these societies is the Royal Society of London, which after several years of preparation, was founded in 1660, received its charter in 1662, and started a library in the following year. This is not the place for more than a passing reference to the Royal Society, though the temptation to dwell on its early history is great ; for the Society was very largely instrumental in inaugurating the era of scientific investigation in this country, and its prestige in the scientific world of to-day and its position as one of the earliest foundations of its kind, outside the state-aided academies of the continent of Europe, render it of especial interest to all who are studying the history of science in any of its various aspects. It attracted to its membership scientists of all kinds ; but its activities were, generally speaking, confined to what is called pure science, and were concerned but little with the technical application of scientific discovery to industry. This was to remain uncared for until almost a century later, when there were formed two

societies which had for their express object the encouragement of the arts and industries of the country—one, the Royal Dublin Society in Ireland, which after a somewhat chequered career was finally established in 1731, and the other the society known to-day as the Royal Society of Arts, which was started in London twenty-three years later.

Without in any way depreciating the immense amount of valuable work, especially in connexion with agriculture, which this latter society accomplished in its early days, it is permissible to doubt, being wise after the event, whether its system of granting premiums to original inventive genius was the most suitable that could have been adopted for the purpose aimed at. In any case it does not appear that its manifold activities had any great influence in directing the minds either of the industrialists or of the public towards the benefits that would accrue from the organized application of scientific research to industry and to our daily needs. But one thing it certainly did do. And this was to foster that spirit of co-operation amongst scientists which had been introduced with the Royal Society, and which, appealing strongly to those working in the same field, led to the formation of a number of subsidiary societies and their libraries, each devoted to a particular branch of knowledge.

A few of these were indeed already in existence, but they were all concerned with medicine or natural history, subjects with which the Society of Arts did not profess to deal. Edinburgh claims the earliest of these, the Medical Society of that city having been founded in 1737. The Medical Society of London followed in 1773, and in quick succession were founded the Medical Institute of Liverpool (1779); the Royal Society of Edinburgh, which, though now of a much wider

character, was mainly medical in its origin (1783); the Linnean Society (1788); the Medico-Chirurgical Society of Aberdeen (1789); the Physical Society of Edinburgh (1790); and the Royal Medical and Chirurgical Society (now a part of the Royal Society of Medicine), 1805. All of these have libraries dating practically from their foundation.

This is not the occasion to deal in detail with the long list of these early societies, or with the still more lengthy one of those of the nineteenth century. Some of these had but transient existences, and others had no libraries, but it may be worth while referring to a few of the most important, because they furnish a clue to the chronology and evolution of the scientific library. Most of those mentioned are, too, the earliest devoted to their respective subjects in this or any other country, and are from that point of view well worth a passing reference. Thus the Geological Society was founded in 1807; the Institution of Civil Engineers—the first of the great engineering societies—in 1818; the Astronomical Society in 1820; the Royal Agricultural Society in 1831; the Chemical Society and the Pharmaceutical Society, both in 1841; the Institution of Mechanical Engineers, with George Stephenson, the railway engineer, as first president, in 1847; the Royal Photographic Society in 1853; the Institution of Engineers and Shipbuilders in Glasgow in 1857; the Royal Aeronautical Society in 1866; the Iron and Steel Institute in 1869; the Institution of Electrical Engineers in 1871, and so on. By the end of the nineteenth century, most of the wider branches of science had their societies and their libraries. With the present century an age of extreme specialization was ushered in, and the societies that are now being formed in ever increasing numbers, are devoting themselves to the

study and promotion of small divisions of subjects already covered in their wider and more general aspects by the older institutions. In the chemical field, for instance, there have separated from the parent body distinct organizations representing chemical industry, biological chemistry, chemical engineering, agricultural chemistry, textile chemistry, leather chemistry, paint and colour chemistry, and others, whilst in engineering such special topics as concrete, automobiles, aeronautics, heating, illumination, refrigeration, water supply, sanitation, etc., have their own special societies and libraries.

All the libraries referred to so far belong to private or semi-private institutions, and the collections are primarily for use only by the members of those institutions, and are not openly available to the general public. It is, of course, true that in practice the restrictions imposed on the use of the books by non-members are not always rigorously enforced. The resources of most, if not all of these libraries, are usually available to *bona fide* students for the consultation of works not otherwise easily accessible to them, and help and advice are always given without stint. But the absence of any right of access for the non-member has undoubtedly been a deterrent to a wider use of their invaluable resources, and to the growth of a healthy desire for knowledge in the community at large, which it should be in the interest of the State to encourage.

In the absence, however, of enlightened millionaires, the provision of public libraries cannot be made without direct endowment by the State or municipal authorities, and it must be admitted that in this direction the activities of these bodies have not been conspicuous, though the Government is not entirely without credit. The Geological Survey and Museum was opened to the public in Craig's Court, Charing Cross, in 1841,

and transferred to Jermyn Street in 1851, and it is probable that the public were admitted to the use of the attached Library from the earlier date. But the first definitely public scientific library, as such, to be formed, was that of the Patent Office in 1855. The Library of the Science Museum, South Kensington, which followed two years later, was founded as a library of educational works, but has now a general science collection, of great value, to which the public are admitted. The Library of the Natural History Museum, the National Physical Laboratory, the Imperial Institute, which was transferred to the State in 1902, and departmental libraries, such as those of the Department of Agriculture and the Meteorological Office, complete the record of the State's activities in the promotion of scientific research up to the outbreak of the war. A few months of war, however, were sufficient to show in a vivid and all-conclusive way that the needs and aspirations of the community could not be satisfied unless better provision were made to encourage research and utilize its results for the benefit of industry, as well in civil as in military and naval affairs. The formation of the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research was the first sign that the nation had realized its position, and the establishment, under the ægis of that Department, of Research Associations for many of our most important industries has gone some way to supply the deficiency caused by the apathy and neglect of past years. Twenty-three industries<sup>1</sup> have now formed associations under the scheme, and these have already

<sup>1</sup> Photography, Scientific Instruments, Wool and Worsted, Motor-car and Allied Industries, Boots and Shoes, Sugar, Cotton, Iron, Glass, Linen, Indiarubber, Cocoa and Confectionery, Non-Ferrous Metals, Refractories, Shale Oil, Laundrywork, Leather, Cutlery, Electrical Industries, Motor-cycles, Silk, Cast Iron, and Flour.



not only given an impetus to the industries immediately concerned, but have added a chapter to the history of the scientific library. The associations are created and financed by the industry itself, with the assistance of a grant from the Government for a limited period at the beginning of their existence, and by thus pooling the resources of the various individual firms for research purposes, are rapidly becoming centres of scientific activity and bureaux of information of the first importance. Most of them have formed or are forming libraries under trained and experienced librarians, which are providing valuable reference material for the research workers associated with them, and will, when developed, form an important part of the library system of the country. The municipal authorities, too, are taking action. Instead of maintaining a half-hearted collection of scientific and technical works sandwiched between Philology and Literature, many of these are viewing with favour the establishment as part of their library system of special comprehensive technical sections, housed separately and under the direction of an expert staff. This has been done already in some cases, notably at Manchester, Sheffield, Birmingham, and Glasgow, where important libraries have been formed, and is in process of being carried out in other towns. The close acquaintance that these libraries have with the industrial needs of the community they serve, their up-to-date information files, and their intimate association with similarly formed commercial libraries are proving of rapidly increasing value, and an extension of the movement to all-important centres throughout the country is to be encouraged.

There is one other class of technical library that is making headway in this country—though not on the same scale and with the same speed as in America.

These are attached to individual industrial firms or trade associations, and act as information bureaux for the various departments, administrative, commercial, and technical, of the firms concerned. Many of the largest industrial establishments have had departments of this character for some years, with increasing advantage to themselves; but they are now becoming not only more numerous, but what is more important are being organized on scientific lines and placed in the charge of trained and experienced librarians and bibliographers. Information regarding the extent to which this movement has spread throughout the country is scanty and difficult to obtain, and a detailed survey is not possible, but the following can be mentioned as examples: The Dunlop Rubber Company (Birmingham); General Electric Company (Wembley); Metropolitan Vickers, Ltd. (Manchester); Messrs. Rowntree (York); Nobel's Explosives Co. (Glasgow); British Thomson-Houston Co. (Rugby); Kynoch, Ltd. (Birmingham); and Kodak, Ltd. (Harrow).

This rapid and bird's-eye review of the historical development of the country's resources in scientific and technical libraries,<sup>1</sup> indicates at least that the movement has been one of comparatively rapid and continuous growth, and is in full swing to-day. Indeed, a statistical summary of all such libraries throughout the country would probably reveal a numerical result that could in itself be regarded as not altogether incommensurable with the country's needs, were it not that the satisfaction given by the figures would have to be leavened by a consideration of the nature and relative efficiency of the various collections, and by the disproportion existing between the numbers for London and for the provinces. Probably not less than one-half of the total number—

<sup>1</sup> University Libraries and those of educational establishments have not been considered here. They are dealt with in a separate chapter.

and of these the largest and most representative—would be found in London. All but the most recent of these are described in Rye's excellent *Guide to the Libraries of London*, to which work the reader is referred for fuller information.<sup>1</sup>

Of the number, not more than four can be described as public—the Patent Office and the Science Museum, both dealing with general science apart from medicine, the first preponderating in technology and the latter in pure science, the Geological Survey and Museum, and the St. Bride Typographical Library, which was founded in 1885, and contains one of the most complete collections in Great Britain of works relating to printing, book-binding, paper-making, and allied industries.

Of the libraries devoted to specific branches of knowledge, those dealing with medicine and cognate subjects head the list with eighteen, including one, that of the College of Physicians, which may perhaps be regarded as the oldest scientific library in the kingdom, since its nucleus is said to have been the private collection of

The following is a list of the most important libraries that are not included in the 1910 edition of Rye: Aero Club, Air Ministry, Department of Scientific and Industrial Research, Institute of Metals, Institution of Automobile Engineers, Institute of British Foundrymen, Institution of Mining Engineers, Institution of Petroleum Technologists, Institution of Structural Engineers (formerly the Concrete Institute), Medical Research Council, The Optical Society, the Post Office Research Department, Research Association of British Rubber and Tyre Manufacturers, Royal Aeronautical Society, Royal Mint, Woolwich Research Department. In addition the following Research Associations and other institutions have libraries which are in process of formation, but are not as yet very extensive: British Association of Research for Cocoa, etc.; British Launderers' Research Association, British Scientific Instrument Research Association, The Institution of Rubber Industry, Paper Makers' Association of Great Britain, the National Institute of Industrial Psychology, The Research Association of British Motor and Allied Manufacturers.

Thomas Linacre, the founder of the College in 1518. Engineering follows with eleven, of which the chief is that of the Institution of Civil Engineers, probably the finest engineering library in existence; mining and metallurgy has six; chemistry with chemical industries has five; architecture and building, four; agriculture, astronomy, and aeronautics have three each; horology, meteorology, and geology two each; and the remainder represent such subjects as automobile engineering, brewing, photography, microscopy, printing, and public health.

The libraries of the provinces are neither so numerous nor on the whole so large as those of the metropolis, though there are one or two, notably the Ceramic Library at Stoke-upon-Trent, which specialize in subjects not covered in London outside the general libraries of the Patent Office and elsewhere.<sup>1</sup> No attempt will be made here to give a complete record of the provincial libraries, but the following list does, it is thought, comprise all the important ones and give a very fair idea of their distribution through the country.

*Agriculture :*

Highland and Agricultural Society of Scotland,  
Edinburgh.

Rothamsted Agriculture Experiment Station.

South-Eastern Agricultural College, Wye, Sussex.

<sup>1</sup> There is no satisfactory guide to the provincial libraries. Lists can be found in such annual publications as the *Index Generalis* (a French attempt to replace the German *Minerva*) and the *Literary Year Book*; but these are by no means complete, and not always conveniently arranged. The Association of Special Libraries and Information Bureaux has in preparation a complete guide to the special libraries, special collections, and other sources of information on special subjects in Great Britain and Ireland. An interesting list and account of the libraries of Manchester by Mr. Ernest Axon appeared in the *Library Association Record* for September 1921.

*Architecture :*

Birmingham Architectural Association.

Leeds and West Yorkshire Architectural Society  
Leeds.

Liverpool Architectural Society.

Manchester Society of Architects.

*Art Metalwork :*

Assay Office, Birmingham.

*Astronomy :*

Blackford Hill Observatory, Edinburgh.

Leeds Astronomical Society.

Liverpool Astronomical Society.

*Biology :*

Liverpool Biological Society.

*Botany :*

Birmingham Botanical and Horticultural Society.

Botanic Gardens, Edinburgh.

Liverpool Botanic Society.

*Ceramics :*

Ceramic Library of the Central School of Science  
and Technology, Stoke-upon-Trent (including the  
Solon Library).

*Chemistry :*

Chemical Industry Club, Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

Leeds Chemists' Association.

Liverpool Chemists' Association.

*Engineering :*

Aberdeen Association of Civil Engineers.

Birmingham and District Association. Institution  
of Civil Engineers.

Institution of Engineers and Shipbuilders, Glasgow.

Joint Delegation of the Local Yorkshire Associations  
of the Institutions of Civil, Mechanical Electrical,  
Municipal, and Locomotive Engineers, Leeds.

Leeds Association of Engineers.

*Engineering (continued) :*

Liverpool Engineering Society.

North-East Coast Institution of Engineers and Shipbuilders, Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

North of England Institute of Mining and Mechanical Engineers, Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

*General Science and Technology :*

Birmingham and Midland Institute Scientific Society, Birmingham.

Commercial and Technical Department, Sheffield Public Library.

Commercial Library, Glasgow.

Literary and Philosophical Society, Manchester.

Municipal School of Technology, Manchester.

Municipal Technical School, Birmingham.

Royal Philosophical Society, Glasgow.

Royal Technical College, Glasgow.

Scientific Societies Library, Nottingham Public Library.

Technical and Science Library, Manchester Public Library.

Technical Reference Library, Birmingham.

*Geology :*

Edinburgh Geological Society.

Geological Society, Glasgow.

Leeds Geological Society.

Liverpool Geological Society.

Yorkshire Geological Association, Leeds.

*Glass :*

Society of Glass Technology, Sheffield.

*Marine Biology :*

Scottish Marine Biological Association, Glasgow.

*Medicine :*

Aberdeen Medico-Chirurgical Society.

Durham College of Medicine, Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

Edinburgh Obstetrical Society.

Leeds and West Riding Medico-Chirurgical Society,  
Leeds.

Liverpool Medical Institution.

Manchester Medical Society.

Medical Institute, Birmingham.

Medico-Chirurgical Society, Sheffield.

Northern Counties and Newcastle-upon-Tyne  
Medical Society, Newcastle.

Royal College of Physicians, Edinburgh.

Royal Faculty of Physicians and Surgeons, Glasgow.

Royal Medical Society of Edinburgh.

*Mining and Metallurgy :*

Birmingham Metallurgical Society.

British Cast Iron Research Association, Birmingham.

British Non-Ferrous Metals Research Association,  
Birmingham.

Mining Institute of Scotland, Glasgow.

Safety in Mines Research Board, Sheffield.

Sheffield Metallurgical Association, Sheffield.

*Natural History :*

Birmingham Microscopists and Naturalists Union.

Lancashire and Cheshire Entomological Society,  
Liverpool.

Leeds Naturalists Club and Scientific Association

Liverpool Microscopical Society.

Manchester Museum.

Natural History and Philosophical Society, Bir-  
mingham.

Natural History Society of Glasgow.

*Public Health :*

Glasgow Corporation Health Department.

*Textiles :*

British Cotton Industry Research Association, Man-  
chester.

*Textiles (continued):*

British Research Association for the Woollen and  
Worsted Industries, Leeds.

British Silk Research Association, Leeds.

Textile Institute, Manchester.

Nottingham, perhaps, deserves special notice as an instance of co-operative effort, for there most of the important scientific societies and other technical bodies of the city have combined to form a comprehensive collection covering their various activities. The scheme, initiated in 1918, now includes eight societies,<sup>1</sup> and the joint library is housed at the Central Public Reference Library, whence the books are issued on loan to all members of the societies, and for reference purposes only to the general public.

Such is, in general outline, the scientific library system of the country as it exists to-day. The survey is not complete; a large number of local libraries, for the most part small and incomplete, have been omitted, as has also the much more important class of "Works" libraries which, for reasons already stated, it has not been possible to include.

What do these libraries contain? They contain a part of our inheritance from the past—a past which, as we have seen, manufacturers, scientists, and public alike are beginning to realize is as important as those more obvious and material benefits to which we in our generation have been born, and our possession of them to-day entails an obligation towards posterity that can

<sup>1</sup> The Society of Chemical Industry, Association of Mining Electrical Engineers, Nottingham Society of Engineers, Midland Counties Institution of Engineers, National Association of Colliery Managers, Nottingham Lace and Net Dressers' Association, Nottingham Association of Building Trades Employers, Nottingham Master Hosiery D. & F. Association.



only be discharged by their systematic organization and intelligent use. The recorded experience of the world extends over a course of many centuries, and the whole of this is at our disposal if only we know how to make full use of it. It is perhaps, however, only for the few to delve into the historic past. For the majority of special libraries, concerned as they are in the main with the problems of to-day, and with the perpetual influx of fresh information the value of which depends so largely on its immediate classification and use, considerations of shelf-space and cost will not permit extensive dealings with the literature of the past. When such works are required, recourse must be had to the valuable historical collections which exist not only at the great national libraries like those of the British Museum and the Bodleian, but at the specialist libraries of the Royal Society, the Engineering Institutions, the Chemical Society, and others, and at the libraries of the Patent Office and Science Museum.

The current output of scientific and technological literature is, in fact, so enormous that it is easily sufficient to occupy the time of special librarians. There are probably published annually, throughout the world, relating to one branch or another of science, about 15,000 textbooks, together with some 18,000 periodicals, which appear at intervals throughout the year.<sup>1</sup> No research worker could, of course, possibly be expected to see all these new publications—to say nothing of reading them,

<sup>1</sup> The *World List of Scientific Periodicals*, Oxford University Press, 1925, vol. i, lists a total of 24,028 scientific periodicals existing in 1900 or originating after that date and before 1922. If there be deducted from this figure the number of journals that have ceased publication since 1900, and allowance be made for new journals published since 1921, the figure given in the text will probably be found to represent at a liberal estimate the number of journals current to-day.

even if he were content to confine his attention only to those that normally would appear to lie within his own selected sphere. The complex nature of life and the forces behind it which our ever-increasing knowledge and understanding are revealing to us, and the growing interdependence of the different branches of science on one another, render it impossible for the scientist to shut himself in a water-tight compartment and say, "Thus far will I go, and no farther," and though a very considerable portion of this vast literary output will be found to be of little value or interest for any particular worker, yet it cannot be discarded without examination. It is very necessary that the scientist should know of the existence of this literature, and as far as possible obtain an insight into the contents so that the question of its value may be decided. This is where the special library comes in, for the busy scientist will be unable to devote much of his time to the task, and the work of examination and selection must be done for him by the competent librarian.

It is for this reason that bibliographies, indexes, and abstracts are becoming more and more indispensable to the librarian and research worker alike. Without the great national bibliographies, of which mention has been made, it would not be possible to follow the production of the printing press in the various countries, and indexes and abstracts form the key to the otherwise closed door of the world's periodical literature, which is the everyday working tool of the scientist, and the very backbone of any technical library. Textbooks will always find an essential place on the shelves as important and labour-saving summaries of the state of the art at the date of publication, but it is in the periodical that are first recorded the results of research and the trend of industrial progress and development, and it is on this

that the student must rely for the greater part of his information. The librarian of the technical library will therefore concentrate on periodical literature, and on indexes and bibliographies of all kinds. Fortunately scientific journals themselves furnish a considerable proportion of the existing index literature. There are few journals of note that do not pay attention in one form or another to the current literature of the subject with which it is their object to deal. One important form in which this work appears is that of the book-review column, common to practically all journals, large and small. These reviews—often of considerable technical interest and frequently of works such as the privately printed brochures of individuals or industrial firms that do not appear in the national bibliographies—are important to both scientist and librarian, since they often provide material on which judgment as to the worth of the book from any particular point of view may be formed. In this connexion, the attention of readers may be drawn to the *Technical Book Review Index*, now in its ninth year, published quarterly by the Carnegie Library at Pittsburg. Each number of this contains about 1,000 references to reviews of scientific and technical books in all languages, arranged in alphabetical order of authors' names, which have appeared in some of the most important journals during the previous three months, with particulars of the length of the review and a short abstract. From the very nature of this work it cannot be very up to date—reviews themselves frequently appear a considerable time after the publication of the book—and to a certain extent it thereby loses somewhat in value for the librarian; but it still remains a very important aid to the selection of works for the library, especially of foreign ones of which it would be difficult otherwise to gauge the value.

Bibliographies proper may be divided into two classes, those which treat their subject from an historical and retrospective point of view in an exhaustive survey, collecting together references to its literature from all sources, and those which are concerned with current literature only, and are issued periodically as soon as possible after the publication of the work or works indexed. To the first class belong such library catalogues as those of the important scientific societies and other learned institutions, of which there may be cited as an outstanding example the *Index-Catalogue of the Library of the Surgeon-General's Office of the United States Army*, which includes under one alphabetical arrangement, author and subject entries, not only of the books and other works in the library, but of articles in periodicals and of patents, thus forming a very comprehensive key to the vast literature of medicine and its allied subjects. Then there are catalogues of private collections such as the *Bibliotheca Chemica*, the catalogue of James Young's Chemical Library, or the *Catalogue of the Wheeler Gift of books, pamphlets, and periodicals in the Library of the American Institute of Electrical Engineers* (1909), and such special lists as those frequently issued nowadays by second-hand booksellers, from which class can justifiably be selected for mention here the *Bibliotheca Chemico-Mathematica* of Messrs. Henry Sotheran and Co. (1921), and the *Descriptive Catalogue of Books and Engravings illustrating the Evolution of the Airship and the Aeroplane* of Messrs. Maggs Bros. (1920-23). These latter lists are often particularly valuable for the annotations that accompany many of the entries. Finally there are the more general bibliographies not limited to select collections such as Mottelay's recent *Bibliographical History of Electricity and Magnetism*, the *Bibliography of Aeronautics* from the earliest times down

to 1922, issued first by the Smithsonian Institution and later by the National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics (U.S.); Cockle's *Bibliography of Military Books up to 1640*, and the extremely valuable *Catalogue of Scientific Papers*, 1800-1900, issued in nineteen volumes by the Royal Society, and indexing some 1,500 periodicals. Of bibliographies of this character there is a very large number, and their own bibliography would run into a great many pages. Not only are they becoming more and more common, either as separate publications or as contributions to scientific journals, but no textbook is to-day considered complete without a bibliography of the subject, or at least a very full reference list. These, indeed, often become very important features. Worden's *Technology of Cellulose Esters*, for instance, the first volume of which runs into nearly 4,000 pages, contains a prodigious number of references to books, journals, and patents, with their own indexes, considerably more than half of many of the pages being occupied by references. Not all books are as full as this or as authoritative as, for example, Beilstein's *Handbuch der organischen Chemie*, which is one of the daily tools of the chemist, but the bibliographical material contained in most is frequently quite invaluable as a source for the literature of the subject with which they deal, and the wise librarian will in all important cases see that a note to that effect is added to his subject catalogue or card index.

Another work of bibliographical interest which may be mentioned here, though perhaps more properly belonging to the Biography class, is Poggendorf's *Biographisch-literarisches Handwörterbuch* (8 vols., 1863-1925), which, arranged alphabetically in name order, gives for the scientists of all times and all countries not only the main biographical details of their lives, but also their chief contributions to literature whether as monographs

or as periodical articles. The work is very accurate and reliable, and forms a valuable aid for the cataloguer, and for anyone interested in the writings of an individual author.

The other class of bibliography to which we have referred, namely that dealing with current topics, is issued periodically—and the more frequent the issue the better—either as a separate journal, like *Chemical Abstracts* of the American Chemical Society, or *Science Abstracts*, or, and more usually, as a feature of some journal dealing with the subject. The number of such periodical bibliographies as are now appearing regularly is very large, and is increasing rapidly. A recent investigation undertaken by the Committee on Intellectual Co-operation of the League of Nations shows that there are nearly 400 distinct periodical publications concerned with science and technology in one or other of its branches, which either consist entirely of current bibliographical material or devote a more or less considerable space to it.<sup>1</sup> Of this total, about 250 deal with pure science, including medicine (which latter with allied subjects accounts for about one-half of this number) and the remainder with technology. It is interesting to note that while the German-speaking countries are responsible for by far the larger proportion of these bibliographies (about one-third of the whole number), their preponderance lies almost wholly within the realm of pure science and medicine, the English and American heading the list so far as technology and industry are concerned.

<sup>1</sup> Published as *Index Bibliographicus; Répertoire international des sources de bibliographie courante*. Geneva, 1925. The work is a first attempt at international effort in a matter of this kind, and suffers somewhat by reason of the fact that each country supplied its own list, and that there was no common standard of selection. The list, however, covers all countries and is fairly complete.

Examples of these bibliographies will occur to everyone, and need not be given here. It is sufficient to point out that with the publication of the second volume of the *World List of Scientific Periodicals*, which will show what periodicals can be seen in this country, and in what libraries they may be consulted, their value will greatly increase, for the libraries that possess them will thereby be given access to a far wider range of literature than most of them could ever hope to possess for themselves.

A glance at any of these bibliographies will soon convince the student that a very great deal of the scientific and technical literature that he will have to consult appears in foreign languages—mainly in German and French, though also to a lesser extent and for special subjects in other languages—and one who is not a good linguist will have to make himself conversant with reliable technical dictionaries in the different languages, and with their use. One of the best-known and most useful of these dictionaries is the *Schlomann* series in six languages, of which sixteen volumes have been issued up to the present time, each devoted to a specific branch of technology, and including the raw materials of the industry and the trade and commercial terms employed. In this dictionary the alphabetical order is discarded, and words and phrases are grouped into classes and the exact equivalent given in German, English, French, Italian, Russian, and Spanish, with consolidated indexes at the end. Easy reference is facilitated by illustrations which are given for most of the technical terms, and this, together with the classified arrangement which permits the use of descriptive phrases where necessary, which would not be possible in an ordinary word dictionary, very largely eliminates the danger of a mistranslation. This cannot always be guarded against with ordinary

bi-lingual dictionaries, and the student is advised always to "complete the circle" and check a translation given in one part by referring back again through the second part, or better still to consult one of the national dictionaries where the various shades of meaning attached to a word or phrase are given in detail, as, for example, *The Oxford English Dictionary*, Grimm's *Deutsches Wörterbuch*, Larousse's *Dictionnaire Universel*, Tommaseo and Bellini's *Dizionario della lingua italiana*, etc. Such authoritative works as these should be in constant use; the curious inquirer will find many matters of interest and value in their pages, besides definitions and the meanings of words. Indeed, the *Oxford Dictionary* has frequently been used with success at the Patent Office Library in connexion with investigations of an historical character, bibliographical and other clues being obtained which might otherwise only have been found after a more or less prolonged search.

There are one or two classes of literature of especial importance for technical libraries, which may be referred to here, for they have often been overlooked in the past, and it is essential that their value for research purposes should be clearly recognized. The catalogues of manufacturing firms is one such class. These publications, especially those of the present time, contain a great deal of information on industrial practice, and their usefulness to the inventor, for instance, is very great. They should be classed with other material relating to the subject in the general classification scheme of the library, and in the case of "open access" libraries, should be placed on the shelves in any suitable form with the textbook and pamphlet literature so that they will not be overlooked by a searcher.

The literature of patents for invention which are granted with few unimportant exceptions by every



country in the world, is another class that requires attention by both the librarian and user of the technical library. It is true that "blue-books" are often regarded as dull and uninteresting reading, fit only for politicians; but the volumes of patent specifications of this and other countries not only contain a remarkable record of man's ingenuity extending over a period of more than three centuries, but give in a comparatively clear and concise form practically a day-to-day account of what is being done in industry in the various parts of the world. Not every country, it is true, publishes descriptions of the inventions for which it grants patents, but the files even of those that do are not sufficiently well-known in this country. The British records are well distributed, and can be consulted at most of the larger public libraries throughout the kingdom; but the foreign literature is not so readily, if at all, accessible outside London. The following countries, Great Britain, France, Germany, the United States, Austria, Russia, Switzerland, Japan, Holland, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Australia, India, Jugo-Slavia, Czecho-Slovakia, Poland, and, as a quite recent addition, Italy, print and distribute in separate numbers and at a small price, full descriptions and drawings of all patents granted in their respective countries, the prints usually issuing within a week or two of the satisfactory completion of the official examination. In this way some 130,000 patent specifications are published each year. This is a rather formidable figure, but there is a considerable amount of duplication, arising from the fact that many inventions are patented simultaneously in several countries, and a selection of the patents from Great Britain, United States, France, and Germany would probably meet the needs of most technical libraries, though it might be necessary in certain cases, where for instance the industry concerned is one

which is especially developed in one of the smaller countries, to add the patent literature of that country to the collection. All the countries referred to classify their patents for examination purposes—some of them very minutely—and publish the classification schemes in some form or other, together with weekly or monthly subject indexes or class lists of the specifications published during the period covered, and it is a comparatively easy matter by the use of these lists or of similar lists and abstracts which appear in most of the technical journals, for the technical library to select and obtain copies of all those patent specifications which are likely to be of interest, and file these in any suitable or convenient method.<sup>1</sup>

For those libraries that can ill afford the space or cost of a large number of full specifications, it is worth noting that Great Britain, the United States, and Germany publish in their weekly official journals, abstracts or abridgments of their published specifications together with one or more figures from the drawings. In the German publication these are arranged in class order; in the other two they are in numerical order, but with suitable headings and with the class allotment added. If need be these journals can be cut up and the relevant abridgments pasted on cards and filed in some selected class order for reference. The British office serves the public well in this respect, for every five years it collects together all the abridgments for each of its 271 classes,

<sup>1</sup> It may be mentioned here that at the Patent Office Library, where complete sets of specifications are received from all these countries, and where it would not be possible to re-classify these on one uniform system, the practice is to file one set of the specifications in numerical order, and wherever feasible a duplicate set in class order according to the classification scheme of the issuing patent office. This has been done for Germany, France, Holland, Switzerland, Austria, and the Scandinavian countries.

and issues these in separate volume form. Moreover, during the course of publication of these volumes, it will, when required, issue them sheet by sheet as these are received from the printer, thus enabling the subscribers to make up their own volumes and maintain a complete record of the patent specifications in any particular field.

To prolong the discussion would unduly extend this chapter, and could not but sooner or later trespass seriously on the subject-matter of other parts of the volume. Enough has perhaps been said to indicate to the reader the extent and scope of the technical library resources of the country, and, it is hoped, to arouse his active interest and sympathy. Such interest is indeed necessary if the library system of the country is to reach its full development. A great effort is at the present moment being made amongst librarians, particularly those in the special library movement, towards a fuller co-operation in technique and organization; but much remains to be done which can only be finally completed through the growth of a stimulating desire for knowledge on the part of the public, with the promotion of a wider and surer understanding of what the library stands for, and of the value of the services that it is capable of rendering to the community.

If this book assists in any way the achievement of these objects it will have played its part.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

Very little has been written on the Technical Library apart from occasional articles in the periodical press. The reader can, however, be referred to the several volumes of *Special Libraries*, the organ of the Special Libraries Association (of America), vol. i, etc., New York, 1910, etc.; the *Proceedings of the First (and Second) Conference of the Association of Special Libraries*

*and Information Bureaux, Hoddesdon, September 1924* (The Association, 1925); also as particularly useful reference works *The Libraries of London* by R. A. Rye, 2nd ed. (University of London Press, 1910); *World List of Scientific Periodicals, 1900-1921*, 2 vols. (Oxford University Press, 1925- ); *Index Bibliographicus* (League of Nations, Geneva, 1925); and, for patent literature, to the *Guide to the Search Department of the Patent Office Library*, 4th ed., 1913, and the *Key to the Classification of the Patent Specifications of France, Germany, etc.*, 3rd ed., 1915 (both issued by H.M. Patent Office).

# VII

## THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE AND ARCHIVES

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THE other studies in this book deal with library problems whose nature is well understood. For reasons which will appear the problem of the using of Archives is not well understood and does not proceed upon conventional Library lines: a considerable part of my space must therefore be devoted simply to stating it.

## *What are Archives?*

We start with a simple definition: the word having, to tell the truth, assumed a good many different meanings in the hands of different users. I define<sup>1</sup> *Archives* as *documents drawn up for the purposes of, or used during, a business transaction, public or private, of which they themselves form a part, and subsequently preserved by the persons responsible for that transaction, or their successors, in their own custody for their own reference.*<sup>2</sup> This, while it excludes potentially no variety of document (for

<sup>1</sup> The definition was first used as a basis for my *Manual of Archive Administration* (Clarendon Press, 1922).

<sup>2</sup> A frequent objection is that any writer—a Minister, for example—may give his personal opinion in a minute or dispatch. The answer to this is that all the resulting Archive (the original minute or the dispatch; or a copy of it) proves, and is intended to prove, is the fact that the writer expressed the view; with the correctness or incorrectness of his opinion it is not concerned.

business may require the use of any, from a bill for groceries to a set of nonsense verses), does in practice generally rule out the treatise variety of document, that written *ad suadendum*, to put a point of view before the world at large: the Archive was made, and preserved, in order to put certain facts before a limited and definite set of persons—as often as not the writers themselves; and in particular (let us be emphatic, for this is important) it was not designed to convey information to us who now use it: if it does include a document of the ‘treatise’ kind this last assumes a secondary character; a Minister of State, for example, quoting Scripture for his purpose and thus making the Bible part of the Archives of a Treaty; but only in so far as, and in the connexion in which, he uses it.

Two more points of some moment are, first, that our definition includes *all* business documents; the importance, for example, or unimportance of the business, of which they were a part, to the world at large, has nothing to do with their archive quality: and, second, that Archives are not collected—they accumulate. We may also remark that the preservation of the archive quality is conditioned by the quality of their custody as that is laid down in our definition.

### *Archives and Libraries*

Certain differences between a Library and a Repository of Archives are thus obvious from the first. The writer of a book on (say) some economic subject is giving his personal view, or at least his personal account of what occurred, in order to promote certain opinions in that section of mankind which is interested in his subject: and his work is completed by the Librarian, who brings the resulting book into contact with the people likely to require it. The Archive is not giving anyone’s point



of view, or statement as to what occurred: it is itself an actual part of what occurred. This does not prevent the Archive from being used subsequently for the purposes of economic and other inquiry (many of which would vastly surprise the man who wrote and preserved it if they could be brought to his notice): nor does it prevent the modern librarian, or a new relation of his, the archivist, from doing useful work in the way of making it available for students. But it does mean that the care, arrangement, interpretation, and use of the Archive are all matters for study of a special kind based on an understanding of its natural peculiarity.

### *The Growth of Interest in Archives*

Distrust of the older authority—in the case of History distrust of the Chronicles, with all the superstructure of later writing which was based upon them—has been growing in England since the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, when first antiquaries like Dugdale<sup>1</sup> and then historians like Rymer<sup>2</sup> began to show to what an extent many existing conceptions might be modified by their use and how much new knowledge was waiting to be quarried. Then the County Historians and others working in similar fields showed signs of appreciation: and at the same time began the slow process of awakening Parliament to a sense of the nation's wealth and responsibilities—but to this we shall have to allude below. It must be enough to mention here that the Record Commission, appointed and re-appointed from 1800 to 1837, did much by its publications to make available certain classes of Public Records to the student of general, family, and local history (social and economic studies

<sup>1</sup> Notably in the *Baronage* and *Monasticon*.

<sup>2</sup> *Foedera*, first published 1704–1735.

were subjects of later growth) and to create an appetite for more which has been growing ever since and to which the present Public Record Office, which succeeded the Record Commission in 1838, has ministered in some hundreds of volumes of transcripts, calendars, and indexes. At the present day the process of raising Archives in the estimation of the learned from the position of mere antiquities to that of indispensable sources for the historian may be regarded as complete : and there is no branch of study which, upon its historical side, may not at any moment find itself indebted to them ; from Medical Science to the study of Art, from the history of Sport to Scientific Agriculture.

Two further points suggest themselves : first that the growth of which we have spoken means incidentally that interest in Archives has far transcended the limits of the more imposing collections belonging to the great Departments of State, extending itself to the widest boundaries suggested by our definition ; second that in considering the question of the *use of Archives* we must not confine ourselves to originals but consider also the methods of using those Archives which are available in print.

### *The Development of Archives in England*

At all periods in which writing was being used for the purposes of Administration a certain number of pieces have been preserved with the other treasures of any important ruler : an obvious example in England is furnished by Domesday, preserved, presumably from about the year 1100, in the Royal Treasury and still extant. But regular archive-keeping may be said to date from the time when Authority not only preserves some of the documents which come its way, *in meliorem rei memoriam*, but deliberately and regularly commits to

writing, as an artificial aid to official recollection, a reproduction of the events which took place or of the documents which were dispatched: thus we have some suggestions<sup>1</sup> of a time when *Legal Record* was the recollection by the Justice of what had occurred; but we are concerned with the period when it had come to mean that artificial memory, compiled by or for him, which took the shape of a *Plea Roll*. Our earliest Archives, in this sense, of Royal Administration begin on the Financial side in the middle of the twelfth century,<sup>2</sup> on the Legal later in the same century,<sup>3</sup> and on the Executive at the beginning of the thirteenth.<sup>4</sup> For a detailed study of any or all of these the student must be referred elsewhere<sup>5</sup>: but we may say here that the earliest archives remaining to us belong to a period when each of these great divisions of Public Administration is working with a machinery, and producing Archives, which, though highly organized, are essentially simple and the product of a period of simple needs. The actual keeping of them is also a simple affair: the Treasury at Westminster, some space in the Tower, *ad hoc* arrangements made by the Officials to suit their individual needs—these provide sufficient Repository space.

The history of English Royal Archives from this time (i.e. from the thirteenth century onwards, through the mediæval period) is that of a continually widening

<sup>1</sup> Pollock and Maitland, *History of English Law*, II, p. 667.

<sup>2</sup> The first *Pipe Roll* dates from 1131 and a regular series from 1154.

<sup>3</sup> The first *Curia Regis Roll* is of the reign of Richard I.

<sup>4</sup> The Chancery Enrolments (*Charter, Patent, Liberate, Fine, and Close Rolls*) begin with the reign of John.

<sup>5</sup> The official *Guide* to the Public Records by M. S. Giuseppi (1923, 1924): see also an article on the *Financial Records of the Reign of King John* in the *Magna Carta Commemoration* volume published by the Royal Historical Society.

sphere of influence for Administration (continued increase, for example, on the Financial side, in the number of sources of Royal income), a continual attempt to stretch or modify the old simple machinery to meet new needs which were anything but simple, and continual additions, in consequence, to the number of archive forms which appear to mean one thing and in reality mean something quite different: to take only one example the old simple machinery for acknowledging moneys paid in to the treasury was adapted to serve the purpose of anticipating the Crown Revenue.<sup>1</sup> The one thing we do not have is any scrapping of old forms in favour of new: always the new are added to or hidden under the old; and this applies, in the case of Archives, to every aspect of the documents; so that when new writings,<sup>2</sup> new languages,<sup>3</sup> new forms of document<sup>4</sup> come in they do not oust the old—they are merely set beside them. It is perhaps hardly necessary to say that by the time we reach 1500 English Archives are, in every way, very complicated things: and *mutatis mutandis*, the same features distinguish Local and Private Archives as those we have seen in the Public ones.

The post-mediæval period, which is generally reckoned to begin with the Tudors, brings many changes and new features—the introduction of printing, the spread of the writing habit to classes who had never written before, new learning, new hand-writings, a new form of religion, and, in Public Administration, the great change

<sup>1</sup> See an article on *Tallies* in *Archæologia*, LXXIV, p. 304.

<sup>2</sup> During the fifteenth century special *Set Hands* were evolved for use in particular circumstances by particular departments.

<sup>3</sup> At first Latin was practically the only language of Archives. French began to be introduced in certain of the newer classes in the later thirteenth century, and English in the early fifteenth.

<sup>4</sup> For example, documents under the smaller Royal Seals.

by which the King's Secretaries, ancestors of the modern Secretaries of State, take over the control of the Executive; not to particularize the introduction of new forms of Accounting<sup>1</sup> and new Courts of Law.<sup>2</sup> Yet even now the new did not oust the old: though the Chancery was no longer the instrument of executive authority it continued to flourish with all its old machinery; just as later, when financial control passed to the Commissioners of the Treasury, the old machinery of the Exchequer continued to flourish. It was not till the nineteenth century that mediæval administrative institutions were gradually swept away from public life;<sup>3</sup> and in the realm of private or semi-public jurisdiction it has apparently been reserved for our own time to break the continuity of that most typical of English Local Institutions and Archives the Manor Court with its *Court Roll*.<sup>4</sup> To illustrate the extreme complication of every aspect of Archives in, for example, the Elizabethan period, it may be enough to say that they then employed ten quite distinct varieties of Hand-writing.<sup>5</sup>

### *Resulting Archive Remains*

The chief enemies of Records were classified by Arthur Agarde<sup>6</sup> as 'Fier, Water, Rates and Mice, Misplacings': to which we may add Revolutions and plain

<sup>1</sup> The *Declared Accounts* (for example) in Public Archives, and in Private ones the Italian method of *Ledger, Journal*, etc.

<sup>2</sup> *Court of Star Chamber, Court of Requests*, etc.

<sup>3</sup> The old Exchequer system went in 1826-1832, the use of *Fines and Recoveries* in 1834, the old Courts of Law in 1873, 1874.

<sup>4</sup> Under Lord Birkenhead's Act, 1924.

<sup>5</sup> A preliminary sketch of this subject was published by the writer in *The Library* (June 1922) and a larger work is in hand.

<sup>6</sup> In his *Compendium* of 1610, printed in Palgrave's *Antient Calendars* . . ., II, p. 313.

Ignorance. Of Revolutions we have had comparatively few in England and consequently the national conservatism, of which we have had some glimpses above, resulted in the accumulation of enormous piles of Archives which soon overflowed the simple arrangements of the early Middle Ages for their housing. From the thirteenth century onwards we may assume a continually recurrent problem of over-filled repositories, and a periodical removal of (roughly—but not too much care was taken) the older and less immediately important to supplementary repositories of a more or less improvised and unsuitable nature. ‘Thou may’st not kill but need’st not strive officiously to keep alive’: this typical spirit of compromise (it is by no means dead at the present day) caused the preservation of enormous masses of Archives in England while it permitted or encouraged the destruction, rapid or gradual, of quantities at least no less large. By the end of the eighteenth century the more important Public Archives in London alone were scattered over more than 60 repositories, the character of some of which may be guessed from the ominous word *Vault*<sup>1</sup> stamped on many water-damaged documents at the Public Record Office; and read of in more than one contemporary account.<sup>2</sup> A series of Committees appointed by Parliament between 1703 and 1836<sup>3</sup> fell (save the last one) into the usual error of such bodies—that of considering problems of use and publication rather than those of safety and arrangement.

<sup>1</sup> Documents from Somerset House.

<sup>2</sup> e.g. the Report of the *Select Committee* of 1836, p. viii; or the Introduction (citing earlier accounts) by F. W. Maitland to his edition of the *Memoranda de Parlamento* (*Chronicles and Memorials* Series, 1893).

<sup>3</sup> For a convenient summary of this see Hall, H., *British Archives and the Sources for the History of the World War*, Clarendon Press, 1925, p. 210, and for more detail the works there quoted.

The Report of the Special Committee of 1836 prepared the way for the present administration of the Public Records by the Public Record Office.

The story of local, semi-public, private and ecclesiastical Archives in England is essentially the same: though at one end of the scale a greater personal interest (as in the care of family or estate records) may have led to more careful preservation, at the other a more developed official heedlessness has resulted in greater loss; as in the case of the mediæval archives of county administration, which must have been accumulated in enormous <sup>1</sup> quantities but have perished with an amazing completeness. Here again we have a tale of gradual recognition during the nineteenth century and of numerous Reports by Committees and Commissions <sup>2</sup>: but it has been reserved for the present year to witness the first attempt <sup>3</sup> at a control of local archives of any kind by Central Authority. This is not to say that we forget the numerous Statutes still in force whose provisions include or imply the making and keeping of Archives: what our Statutes have failed to do up to now is to enforce, or provide facilities for, preservation

<sup>1</sup> How enormous we are only beginning to guess from the scattered evidence of occasional accidentally preserved fragments: cf. an article on *Plea Rolls of the Medieval County Courts* in *Cambridge Historical Journal*, No. 1, 1923.

<sup>2</sup> For a summary of Reports on Local Archives see the *Third Report* of the Royal Commission (1910) on Public Records, ii, p. 2, *seq.* The *Historical MSS. Commission* dealing with private collections was instituted in 1870: see its *Nineteenth Report*, 1926. Accounts of other Archives of a more or less public character are scattered over numerous official Reports and Returns, such as the Report (1881) on *Ecclesiastical Courts* and several Returns concerning *Courts of Probate* (1828 etc.).

<sup>3</sup> Under the Amendment to the Law of Property Act, 1924, which gives the Master of the Rolls certain powers over Manorial Archives: this came into force in January 1926.

of the Records whose necessity they implicitly acknowledge. A corollary, of course, is that in the case of the local and private Archives we know far less of the extent of our wealth—and our losses.

### *Classification of Archives*

It should be clear from what we have said that no treatment of Archives from any point of view (arrangement, preservation, or use) can be sound which is not based upon their natural structure, that is upon a study of the administrative activity of which they formed a part. It is also clear that there is always a potential connexion between any two administrations which are in existence at the same time in the same country, and consequently between their Archives, even if this only takes the form of an exchange of letters.<sup>1</sup> Any scheme, therefore, which aims at a survey of Archive possibilities in England must begin with some kind of framework into which all will fit. Such a framework is outlined here.<sup>2</sup>

#### A. ARCHIVES OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION: CENTRAL.

(a) The Archives of over sixty Courts and Departments preserved at the *Public Record Office*.<sup>3</sup>

(b) *Other Archives* in London such as those of

<sup>1</sup> To take a rather more developed example, the tracing of the descent of a single manor may quite well involve a student in the examination of the private Muniments of half a dozen Families, the Archives of a Bishop, the Records of several of the great *Courts* at the Public Record Office, and so forth.

<sup>2</sup> This scheme is set out in rather more detail, with some further authorities, in the General Introduction to a *Guide to Archives relating to Surrey* (Surrey Record Society, 1925).

<sup>3</sup> See the official *Guide*, by M. S. Giuseppi.



*Probate* (at Somerset House), those of the Patent Office, Board of Agriculture, Office of the Clerk of the Parliaments and India Office, which keep, and in many cases publish,<sup>1</sup> their own records.

- (c) *Archives* which are *kept locally* but belong to the centre : such as those of the Registries of the High Court (including District Registries of Probate<sup>2</sup>) or of Local Branches of the Post Office.

#### B. ARCHIVES OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION : LOCAL.<sup>3</sup>

These are the truly local Archives of Administrations which, within their limits, are independent. Mediæval ones (it has been noted) have practically disappeared. Others are

- (a) *Quarter Sessions* Records dating from the sixteenth or seventeenth century.
- (b) Records of *Other Courts*.
- (c) *County Council* Archives dating from the late nineteenth century but in practice generally preserved with (a).
- (d) Archives of *Urban and Rural Districts and Civil Parishes*. These again are purely modern but have inherited often the Archives of earlier civil jurisdictions (such as *Vestry Minutes* and *Rate Books*) from the Ecclesiastical Parishes.
- (e) Archives of *Independent Jurisdictions* such as Boroughs.

<sup>1</sup> e.g. the India Office and House of Lords. For other Departmental Archives not in the Public Record Office see the *Second Report* of the Royal Commission (1910) on Public Records.

<sup>2</sup> On the general subject of Probate see Marshall, G. W., *Handbook to . . . Courts of Probate*, 1895.

<sup>3</sup> See the *Third Report* of the Royal Commission (1910) already cited.

- (f) Archives of *Statutory Authorities* Commissions, Trusts, etc. : such, to take one example, as the *Sewers' Commissions* whose activities begin in the sixteenth century.

A valuable guide to all these will be found in the works on *Local Administration* by Mr. and Mrs. Sidney Webb.<sup>1</sup>

C. ARCHIVES OF SEMI-PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION. These include

- (a) Those of *Companies* discharging more or less public functions, such as Railways and other Trading Companies or commercial bodies dealing with public works.
- (b) *Charitable Foundations*, including educational ones. These may often, of course, date back a considerable way.

D. ARCHIVES OF PRIVATE ADMINISTRATIONS.

- (a) Those resulting from *Ownership of Land* : they include the *Court Rolls*, *Deeds*, and other manorial Archives, often of very great antiquity.<sup>2</sup>
- (b) *Private Muniments, General*, dating mostly

<sup>1</sup> Very few of these Authorities have published *Guides* or other volumes themselves : notable exceptions being the *Middlesex Sessions Rolls*, published by the Middlesex County Council, and a volume on *Parish Archives* published by the Shropshire County Council. The Chairman of the Bedfordshire County Council's Records Committee (Dr. G. H. Fowler) has published a valuable book on *The Care of County Muniments* (1923). A certain number of Counties have printed lists of their Records : and others (for instance London) are active in compilation and arrangement : London has also published some volumes (*Court Rolls*, *Sewers' Commissions*, etc.).

<sup>2</sup> The earliest known *Court Rolls* are of the thirteenth century.

from the post-mediæval period<sup>1</sup> when the use of writing by private persons for their own varied purposes began to be common.

To all these the volumes of the Historical MSS. Commission<sup>2</sup> and the publications of Local Societies form a guide : but it is to be remarked that we have not even yet any real idea of our national wealth in this field.

#### E. ARCHIVES OF ECCLESIASTICAL ADMINISTRATION.

It is to be noted that before the Reformation these included many archives of temporal administration which have now passed elsewhere : such are the archives of Religious Houses and other bodies relating to *Land Tenure* : and from a modern point of view, the large Archives of *Probate* which have been inherited by the modern High Court (see above under A). Purely Ecclesiastical Archives follow the divisions of the Church and may be classed as those of (a) *Archbishops* and *Bishops*, (b) *Archdeacons* and *Rural Deans*, (c) *Parishes*, (d) *Chapters*, etc.<sup>3</sup> Of these, *Parish Registers* may date from Cromwell's Ordinance of 1538, and other Parish documents go back

<sup>1</sup> The earliest collections of family papers of the modern kind are those of the *Paston*, *Cely*, and *Stonor* families, dating mostly from the later fifteenth century, all of which have been published almost completely.

<sup>2</sup> See especially the nineteenth Report and the list there given of collections which have been inspected.

<sup>3</sup> For a general survey of ecclesiastical administration and Archives see Stubbs' *Historical Appendix* to the *Report* of the Commission (1881) on Ecclesiastical Courts : other helpful works are those of A. Hamilton Thompson on *Parish Records* and R. C. Fowler on *Bishops' Registers*, and the general work on Ecclesiastical Records by Claude Jenkins, all in the *Helps for Students of History* series (S.P.C.K.). Parish Registers are enumerated in the *Population Returns* of 1831. For the archives of *Chapters* see the *Reports* of the Historical MSS. Commission.

occasionally to an even earlier date ; while the regular Archives of the bishops and of chapters may be of so early a time as the thirteenth century, with scattered documents of even earlier date.

We must add another class (*e*) for the Archives of *Denominations other than the Church of England* : notable among which are those of the *Society of Friends*.

Finally we have to note the very considerable possibility of

F. *Artificial Collections* of documents which have originally been Archives, but have strayed from custody ; including those of all the libraries, from the British Museum down : and may perhaps, in view of the altogether exceptional circumstances of their creation, make another division for

G. *War Archives* belonging to every kind of war organization, high and low<sup>1</sup>—documents at present terribly scattered and unmeasured and unprovided for.

Two points require emphasizing here. The first is that the divisions in the above classification overlap. In a large number of cases, for example, one administration with its archives has been absorbed by another. Some examples of this have been already noticed (as in the case of Probate above) but there are many others ; thus the Ecclesiastical Commission (which deposits at the Public Record Office) at present controls much property which formerly belonged to the Church and holds the corresponding Archives : three successive Companies ruled the West African trade, inheriting each other's Archives ; and from the last of these the Archives passed to the

<sup>1</sup> For a classification see Dr. Hall's book already quoted.

Treasury: and so forth. The accidents of succession to title<sup>1</sup> in an estate, of a case in Chancery,<sup>2</sup> and the like may at any time lead to a transfer of administrative functions and with them of Archives.

### *The Bulk of English Archive Resources*

The second point is that the outline given above is the merest sketch. To attempt here a detailed treatment of the classes<sup>3</sup> of English Archives is quite hopeless, and one almost despairs even of conveying a suggestion of their bulk. It was once estimated<sup>4</sup> that the Public Record Office contained between three and four million documents; but this was based on a calculation only of bundles and parcels in many cases, and any one of these may contain hundreds of quite separate archives: thirty or forty million would probably be a nearer, and still conservative, estimate. Again one might remind the reader that the Census Returns of 1831 dealt with the *Registers* of 11,309 parishes in England and Wales or that in 1835 there were in England over 15,000 'Parishes or places separately relieving their own paupers': or suggest to him that 150 manors would not be an extravagant estimate for a single County and that any one of these may have left a quite large collection of *Court Rolls*.<sup>5</sup> Statistics are notoriously unimpressive;

<sup>1</sup> For example an enormous quantity of private muniments are among the Public Records owing to there having been at some time a minority of the heir.

<sup>2</sup> e.g. the *Stonor Papers* cited above.

<sup>3</sup> Taking only one of the sixty odd groups in the Public Record Office—the *Chancery*—one finds oneself dealing with about 200 classes of documents.

<sup>4</sup> In an Appendix to the *First Report* of the Royal Commission (1910) on Public Records.

<sup>5</sup> We do not of course know at present what will be the figures resulting from the investigations now being made by the Master of the Rolls.

but if the reader will imagine himself going through thirty or forty documents every day and examine the above figures on that basis he should obtain the desired effect.

### *The Control of Archives in England*

From what we have said it will be observed that one can only state at present that bodies controlling Archives in this country are extremely numerous<sup>1</sup> and that the idea of their co-ordination by a Central Authority is at the embryonic stage; and it is usual to contrast our state, to its great disadvantage, with that of other countries in this matter. It will perhaps be more profitable here to dwell on the possibilities of better things. One or two promising signs have been already noted, and a good deal of encouragement may be drawn from the attention now paid to Archive matters in Libraries<sup>2</sup> and by no small number of Local Authorities. It would be invidious to particularize cases where the latter have within recent years appointed specially qualified Archive Clerks; one can only hope that the number will go on increasing, and indeed it is not impossible that Archive salvation for this country, with its enormous bulk of private and local Archives, may come largely through local effort. In this con-

<sup>1</sup> To take one example, the Archives in which record of *Enclosures* may be found include those of the King's Bench, Court of Common Pleas, Exchequer of Pleas, Exchequer (King's Remembrancer), Chancery, Duchy of Lancaster, Principality of Wales, Palatinate of Chester, Board of Agriculture, Department of Woods and Forests, Land Registry, and Ecclesiastical Commission besides numerous Diocesan Registries, Chapters, Parishes, and Manors.

<sup>2</sup> As in duty bound I must record the example set by the authorities who include a measure of Archive Science in the requirements for a Librarianship Diploma at University College, London.

nexion one may call in evidence a now wide-spread interest among local archæologists.<sup>1</sup>

We may also dwell with a certain satisfaction on the number of works acting as *Guides* (some of them have been cited above) which in one way or another—in the bibliographies of Special Studies published by Economists and Historians, in the reports of Commissions, in the transactions of Local Societies—have in fact come into existence during the last fifty years. In this matter of publication, largely by private effort or as a result of private demand, we begin to compare not unfavourably with other countries: though there is still but a small proportion done of what is required and a crying need for bibliography and for co-ordination of effort and of method.

### *Publication*

It may be convenient here, since we have cited the printing of Archives both as a sign of awakened interest in England and as a reason for work in co-ordination and bibliography, to give figures showing what in a few instances has been done. Thus the Record Commission (1800–1837), excluding activities in Ireland and Scotland, published about eighty volumes; the Record Office which succeeded it has published over seventy Reports, the earlier of which contained large appendices of Calendars, Indexes and so forth, over 400 separate large volumes of Calendars or Printed Transcripts (specializing in the Archives of *Chancery* and the *State Paper Office*)

<sup>1</sup> The last session (November 1925) of the Congress of Archæological Societies was devoted almost exclusively to the question of the *Court Rolls* and that of *District Probate Registries* and their Archives. At its previous session it appointed a Committee to consider the possibility of a central bibliography of MS. sources which have been made available in print.

and forty of Indexes ; besides over 200, in the *Rolls and Memorials* series, not dealing as a rule with Archives, and five successive *Guides* to the Public Records<sup>1</sup>: to these, of course, must be added a much larger number available only in manuscript at the Office and a recently compiled *Catalogue* in eight volumes of all known official means of reference to the Records, printed or in manuscript ; typed copies of which are available at Cambridge and Oxford and in the British Museum and the Institute of Historical Research in London. It has moreover gone a long way towards completing a card index of all Public Records that have been printed in full, no matter in what publication. These last two features (the catalogue and the card index) do not exist, so far as is known, in any other European Archives.

Turning to private or semi-private Archives, we have to note that the Historical MSS. Commission, to which reference has already been made, has published more than 150 volumes of Reports and Calendars and one part (Topographical) of a general guide to the whole.

There is no space to do more than allude to the vast accumulation of publications by private persons or bodies both of Public and of Local Archives. The natural basis for such effort is local, and particularly county, history, and there are few counties now which have not their societies devoted to this purpose—many of them bodies which have been publishing for fifty years or more and seldom (at least during the later part of their life) without considerable indebtedness to Archive sources ; while in recent years many of them have thrown off branch societies devoted to the sole purpose

<sup>1</sup> The Stationery Office *List Q* forms a useful bibliography of official Record Publications.



of printing documents.<sup>1</sup> Beside these have to be set a considerable number of societies printing in some interest other than local: the Selden Society (Legal) has published 41 volumes; the Pipe Roll Society (founded for the purpose its name implies) has issued all the *Pipe Rolls* of the reign of Henry II and some other volumes drawn from early sources: and there are in addition the Society of Antiquaries, the Huguenot Society, the British Record Society (printing mainly indexes of *Probate Records*), the Society for Nautical Research, the Royal Historical Society, the Jewish Historical Society—in fine, if this country has to acknowledge itself behind others in respect of a national policy with regard to Archives it certainly need not fear comparisons with the multiplicity and extent of its private effort in the matter of publication. It can claim also perhaps the most serious effort that has yet been made in the way of regularization and standardization of method in two recently published *Reports on Editing*.<sup>2</sup>

### *Conclusion*

So we have our problem stated and perhaps something more; for after what has been said there should be little need to emphasize the fact that the student's approach to Archives must be governed by a consideration of the administrative circumstances which produced Archives likely to be of use to him, coupled with a consideration of the point at which the person or thing which interests him impinged upon that Administration and consequently those Archives: a common-sense procedure acting upon a settled Archive theory—that

<sup>1</sup> e.g. Yorkshire (66 volumes), Sussex (30), Surrey (25).

<sup>2</sup> by Committees of the Anglo-American Historical Committee: published in the *Bulletin* of the Institute of Historical Research, Nos. 1 and 7.

supplied in our definition of the word *Archive*. Nor should it be necessary to reiterate the need for bibliographical work not only on the mass of our Archives, but also on the mass, already so large, of Archive publications.

There are, however, two points of view upon which we might dwell for a final moment with some profit : and they may be expressed in the words *scholarly method* ; or alternatively *objective method*. We have suggested above that the approach to Archives from without—i.e. purely from the standpoint of any modern historical requirement—is bound to be dangerous, because, the Archive having been constructed for the convenience not of the modern investigator but of the contemporary administrator, we cannot, unless we look at it with his eyes (i.e. from within), be sure of interpreting it correctly. Expressed in other words, this means that the key to correct interpretation of Archives is the study of the administration that produced them. May we then lay it down that, since large tracts of administrative history remain yet unreclaimed, and since the vastness of the mass of unworked Archives gives to proposing research-workers an enormously wide range in their choice of subjects, they should choose, in the name of scholarship, those lines of investigation which, in addition to the contribution they make to the writers' own knowledge, will be of most service (by the light they throw on administrative history) to other workers who are to follow ? Given two possible lines of research, that is the scholarly one to choose which, besides serving one's own purpose, opens up the largest field to one's successors.

The second point is a variation upon the first. If the mass of Archives at which we have endeavoured to hint is to be handled at all it can only be by the co-operative effort of all the interests involved—Historical, Artistic,

Economic, Linguistic, and the rest ; and, if any piece of work upon Archives is to be made part of a reasonable whole, available for the purposes of all kinds of workers, it can only be by a method which, no matter what form the work takes (indexing, listing, calendaring, or transcription), is governed by a desire not to get what the editor wants out of the document, but simply to express the document—all that there is of it—in modern terms. The editor who does not bother about spelling or punctuation or any other feature of his document, merely because they do not concern him, is guilty of a crime against scholarship ; because another editor may have to spend what might be profitable time in doing the work all over again in another interest.



VIII

COLLECTIONS OF MANUSCRIPTS

BY ROBIN FLOWER, B.A.

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THE history of the great collections of MSS. is the story of what I may perhaps be allowed to term the progressive immobilization of written books. If MSS. are to be made available for study, and particularly for that minute comparative study which alone can elicit their last secrets, they must be gathered together from their dispersion in separate private libraries liable to sudden disruption by the death or the changing fortunes of the owners and concentrated in large repositories, either public or the property of relatively permanent corporations. There the continuity of their life is, so far as human things allow, assured, they are exposed to fewer risks, a tradition of handling and conserving them is developed and maintained, and—a point which we here are in no danger of forgetting—by the very fact of their existence and the necessity of making them readily available to the community of scholars they call into being a race of men dedicated to their care and elucidation. This, then, is my subject—the gradual process by which MSS. have been gathered into the great public collections or other collections which have some reasonable hope of continuous existence. I can of course treat only a small portion of the subject, that is, the history of the libraries of England, and there again I shall limit myself mainly to MSS. in the English language

and of a date previous to the Reformation. The limitation to MSS. in the English language will absolve me from the necessity of dealing at length with the fascinating, but intricate, subject of mediæval libraries and mediæval catalogues. For as a general thing English books were not prized in the monasteries and universities, the catalogues of whose libraries are accessible to us.

An exception must be made in the case of Anglo-Saxon books. These were perhaps preserved rather as curiosities than from any genuine interest in their contents. The few English books in the library of Glastonbury in 1247 are described in the catalogue as old and useless. We should not so describe them to-day. The best-known collection of Anglo-Saxon books in a mediæval collection is the remarkable set of fifteen MSS. catalogued under the separate heading of "Libri Anglici" in the list of the books of Christ Church, Canterbury, in Prior Eastrý's time (1284-1331). It is pleasant to think that some proportion of these books has come down to us. One of them, the "*Genesis anglice depicta*," may be the famous Bodleian Cædmon, another is probably the Corpus Christi MS. of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, a third has been identified with the copy of Alfred's version of Bede's History in the Cambridge University Library. But such a list is a rare caprice of fortune. Of the three famous MSS., which contain most of what survives of Anglo-Saxon poetry, one, the Exeter Book, is in the Exeter Cathedral Library; another, the Vercelli Book, has been preserved in a cathedral library, but not in England, at Vercelli in North Italy, from about the thirteenth century; and the third, the Beowulf manuscript, now in the Cotton collection in the Museum, was probably in a monastic library, but its mediæval history is unknown. Of books in Middle English in these libraries we know little. Dan Michael of North-



gate's *Ayenbite of Inwit* is duly entered in the catalogue of St. Augustine's, Canterbury, but that is rather a fearsome book, valuable to philologists, but of small account as literature. The famous early fourteenth century MS. of French and English poetry, Harley 2253, which contains those lovely snatches of English song :

Lenten is come with love to toune,  
With blosmen and with briddes roun,

and many another, is associated with Leominster, a cell of Reading Abbey, but does not appear, I believe, in any mediæval catalogue. The beautiful cuckoo song is in a Reading MS. of the fourteenth century. But these are rare instances, which might perhaps be added to without affecting the general statement that the monasteries were not the great preservers of English literature. A certain proportion of the literature of devotion in English was no doubt on the monastery shelves, and this will, one imagines, make up the bulk of the entries in Miss Margaret Deanesley's promised list of English books from mediæval catalogues. But secular literature was in the main in the hands of lay folk. Few of their catalogues have survived. Certain brief catalogues will be found in the lists given in Appendix C to E. A. Savage's *Old English Libraries*. And at the end of the period, the Earl of Kildare's catalogue has seven English books as against twenty-one in Latin, twenty in Irish, and eleven in French. Some light on books possessed by lay folk is also thrown by bequests in wills. But normally these are again books of devotion. A list of religious books so bequeathed is given by Miss Deanesley in her *Lollard Bible*, p. 391. It is pleasant to record that a clerk of East Hendred, Berks, one Richard Sotheworth, left, among other books, in 1417, *Quendam librum meum de Canterbury Tales*.

These MSS. in lay hands, never collected into libraries and exposed to all the chances of destruction, must have disappeared in great quantities and it is not unreasonable to suppose that much fine literature went with them. "The Pricke of Conscience," a poem of incredible dullness, exists in no less than 99 copies, while of the "Pearl" and "Sir Gawayne and the Greene Knight," those beautiful works, only one copy survives. In particular we have, there can be little doubt, but a scanty gleanings of mediæval lyrics. The lovely thing :

He came all so stille  
Where his mother lay  
As dew in Aprille  
That falleth on the spray

survives only in one scrubby little MS., probably a minstrel's commonplace book. And so with many another delightful song, stray birds singing a little disconsolately with the silence of all their dead companions about them. Our pleasure in what survives can never entirely do away our regret for the losses we have suffered. It is the librarian's dream that it may be given him to discover additions to these precious relics. And in the sequel I shall hope to show how the salvage from the great shipwreck of the Middle Ages has been brought to land and progressively safeguarded against the further injuries of time.

For, at any rate from the librarian's point of view, the Middle Ages ended in a great shipwreck. Two things, the change of faith that brought about the dissolution of the monasteries, and the change of literary taste that, creating a new world, had little regard for the fortunes of the relics of the old, bore hard upon the settled books in libraries and the vagrant books that wandered from hand to hand among the lay folk. There seemed at one

time serious danger of the disappearance of a great proportion of the antiquities of England. The motive behind the dispersal of the monastic libraries was an odium theologicum, but the new owners of the monastic sites were little solicitous to distinguish between theological and other books of the old dispensation. Leland's inquest into the libraries of England might have borne more fruit for the Old Royal Library founded by Edward IV than it actually did, though the additions so made were considerable, but the purge of the days of Edward VI did great havoc even in this refuge. And the same time deprived Oxford of the great library founded by Humphrey Duke of Gloucester. Nevertheless the antiquarian spirit was already awake and private collectors began to repair the damage done by the great storm. The Protestant fanatic, Bishop Bale, and the alchemist and crystal-gazer, Dr. Dee, set to work to make the collections, which at any rate in the case of the latter antiquary have, in great part, survived. Dee is said to have proposed to Queen Mary the establishment of something like a national library, but nothing came of the suggestion. A considerable part of Archbishop Cranmer's library reached, as we shall see later, through the hands of the Earl of Arundel and Lord Lumley, the now safe harbourage of the Royal Library. The collectors of this time had their prejudices. Thus Bale describes the books which formed a great part of all monastic libraries in these pleasant terms: "The Bishop of Rome's laws, decrees, decretals, extravagants, Clementines, and other such dregs of the devil; yea of Heytesburie's sophisms, Porphyrie's universals, Aristotle's old logics, and Dunse's divinity, with such other lousy legerdemains and fruits of the bottomless pit." Modern cataloguers who have had to do with the large masses of such books still surviving would perhaps not greatly

regret the loss of others of the kind, if it were not for the suspicion that much else of real value perished with them.

But the period in which our modern libraries really take their rise was now at hand. The first great representative of the new era was Archbishop Parker, a very large part of whose collections has survived in his own University of Cambridge to the present day. His motive is succinctly expressed by his biographer Strype: "He was a mighty collector of books to preserve, as much as could be, the ancient monuments of our nation from perishing." This is the note of the whole period. The antiquities of England were in danger of destruction, and private individuals must take in hand what should have been the duty of the state. Parker is said to have approached Queen Elizabeth in the matter, and there still survives a draft of a memorandum by certain members of the Elizabethan Society of Antiquaries, in which a scheme for a national library is outlined. A few quotations from this will show the ideas behind the movement, which owed much, we may well believe, to the inspiration of Parker himself.

"The scope of this petition," it declares, "is to preserve divers old bookes concerninge matters of history of this realme originall Charters & monumentes in a Library to be erected in some convenient place of the hospitall of the Savoy, St. John's (Clerkenwell) or elswhear. This Library to be intituled the Library of Queene Elizabeth and the same will be well furnished with divers auncient bookes and monumentes of antiquity & wyche otherwise maye perishe and that at the costs & charges of divers gentlemen which will be willinge theirunto. That yt may please the Queenes Majesty to encorporate the persons so studious of antyquyty for the better preservation of the said Library & encrease

of knowledge in that behalf. The name of this Corporation to be the Academye for the studye of Antiquity and Historye founded by Queene Elizabeth or otherwise as yt shall please her Majesty."

This petition, signed among others by Sir Robert Cotton, of whom we shall hear more, was either never presented or failed of its object. The literary glories of the age of Elizabeth were not gained at the expense of the parsimonious Queen. And, generous though the offer of the petitioners to bear the expense was, she could hardly have avoided some participation.

But to return to Archbishop Parker. It is largely to him that we owe the revival of Anglo-Saxon studies. His motive here was partly historical, partly theological. He hoped to find evidences in favour of Protestant doctrines in Anglo-Saxon writings, and he published from his collections a sermon of Ælfric which he held to have been made against transubstantiation. But he was too good a scholar to be limited by merely controversial interests, and his surviving collections, as well as his correspondence, attest the width and liberality of his mind.

In his catalogue of the MSS. of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, Dr. James gives a list of Parker's surviving Anglo-Saxon MSS. with their provenance, which serves to reinforce what I have said above of the part of the monasteries in preserving Anglo-Saxon writings. Parker not only collected MSS. and printed parts of their contents at his own expense, but he also took steps to preserve his collections for the benefit of posterity. He presented a number of his books to the Cambridge University Library in his lifetime, and left the bulk of them to his own college, Corpus Christi, with careful directions for their preservation. Some others of his books are in the Lambeth Library, founded by his second

successor, Archbishop Bancroft, as a library for the archbishops of Canterbury, no doubt under the inspiration of Parker's example.

The great age of book collecting and library founding had now begun. Cotton, whom we have seen as a mover in the project for a national library, began, on the failure of the scheme, to supply its place by extensive collection on his own account. His motive can be best defined in the words of the petition quoted above: to collect "divers old bookes concerninge matters of history of this realme, originall charters and monumentes," but he went far beyond the strict interpretation of these words. Here again, following Parker's example, he made a special point of seeking out Anglo-Saxon books, and from the splendid Lindisfarne Gospels with their Northumbrian Gloss through the MS. of Beowulf to the four copies of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle the collection contains God's plenty of MSS. illustrating that period of the literature. If the MSS. in the Parker and Cotton collections had been lost, we should know little of the literature of England before the Norman Conquest. Moreover, from the Cotton MSS. in particular, we can draw examples of almost every period and type of English mediæval literature. Thus the collection contains the only two extant copies of Layamon's *Brut*, the first English treatment of the story of Arthur, three copies of the *Ancren Riwele* (the earliest extensive monument of the new English prose), one of the two MSS. of the "Owl and the Nightingale" (the poem in which Early Middle English, becoming courtly and refined, yet loses nothing of its vernacular force), copies of both the Southern and the Northern English Legendaries—the Golden Legend of Mediæval England—Robert of Gloucester's *Metrical Chronicle* and Trevisa's English version of Higden's *Polychronicon*, an excellent series of the four-

teenth century metrical romances satirized by Chaucer in the "Ryme of Sir Thopas," the MS. of miracle plays wrongly styled the *Ludus Coventriæ*, lyrical poems of the thirteenth century, the beginnings of the later prose in works associated with the names of Richard Rolle of Hampole, John Wycliffe, and that giant humbug the knight Sir John Mandeville, and many other works, from all of which it would be possible to lay down the lines of English literature before the Renaissance and the Reform. To have preserved all this is no small service, quite apart from all the other treasures which the Cottonian collection contains in such rich variety.

Cotton also assisted Bodley in his foundation of the great library which bears his name. But before dealing with that institution, the first really public library in Europe, we must retrace our steps and touch upon two collections which were ultimately to come together with Cotton's books into the national library. The Royal Library, we have seen, was founded by Edward IV, and, largely through the efforts of Leland, was increased under Henry VIII to suffer purgation at the hands of Edward VI's Commissioners. It was increased only by casual accessions under the Tudors, but among those accessions was the famous Queen Mary's Psalter, the most glorious monument of mediæval English art. Under the first Stuart it received the addition of a great private library, that of John Lord Lumley, purchased by King James for his son, Prince Henry, a prince of high hopes and short life, after the owner's death in 1609. This library included the collections of Henry Fitzalan, Earl of Arundel, who again had acquired a considerable number of the books of Archbishop Cranmer. Much of the wreckage of the monastic libraries was also included. From this provenance we should not expect many English books, and indeed the English MSS. of

the Royal Library as a whole are not its most remarkable feature. Nevertheless a glance at the list of *initia* appended to the recent Catalogue of Royal MSS. will show that even here the collection makes a respectable show, containing mediæval MSS. of all periods from the thirteenth century lives of saints connected with the *milieu* of the *Ancren Riwele* down to works of Chaucer and Lydgate.

The Lord Arundel whose books increased the Royal Library is to be distinguished from the Thomas, second Earl of Arundel, a great part of whose collections are now under the same roof. This was the famous connoisseur of late Tudor and Stuart times, whose collection of MSS. had for its basis the gatherings of his relation, the Lord William Howard, known in tradition as Belted Will. The fortunes of his books will fall to be considered later. We may now return to Sir Thomas Bodley and his foundation. The Oxford University Library, first founded *circ.* 1320, by Thomas Cobham, Bishop of Worcester, in a little chamber attached to the University Church of St. Mary's, had been extended between 1435 and 1446 by the gift of some 300 MSS. from Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, and dissipated by those Commissioners of Edward VI whom we have already seen at work in the Royal Library. Thomas Bodley, a former fellow of Merton, retiring from the diplomatic service, decided to devote the rest of his life to restoring the library of his university. The offer was made in 1598, and by 1602 the library was thrown open for public use, the first of its kind in Europe. At the outset it was mainly a collection of printed books, containing only about 300 MSS. But from the first it became clear that the library was to play a great part as a point of concentration for private benefactions. Before it was opened it had received,



among other donations, the gift of the MS. of the Anglo-Saxon Gospels, which had served as the basis of the edition issued by John Fox at Archbishop Parker's expense in 1571, and was to be used by Francis Junius for a new edition in 1665.

We are here on the threshold of the great age of manuscript-collecting proper, the seventeenth century. All who have studied the literature of that period know that it is marked by a curiosity at once minute and wide-ranging, a passion of research which sought to defend and illustrate every movement of the contemporary mind by instances farfetched and dearbought from the whole field of the historic past. It is the age of the subtle preachers and the metaphysical poets, both kinds meeting in the strange figure of John Donne, of the legal antiquaries typified by John Selden, of the high churchmen like Archbishop Laud, whose doctrines sought their roots in Church history and Church ritual, of the antiquaries like Anthony Wood, Oxford's historian, and his friend the maggoty-brained John Aubrey, of the theologian turned doctor, Robert Burton of the *Anatomy*, and the doctor turned theologian, Sir Thomas Browne—an age eager above all others in English history in the pursuit of the unattainable in life, in religion and in politics. It is not without reason that this age is described in the introduction to Bernard's catalogue of the MSS. of England as “*aetas in manuscriptis indagandis supramodum curiosa*,” an age immoderately curious on the track of manuscripts.

And, since as yet there was no national library, the accumulations of the time naturally gravitated towards the Bodleian. In 1634 came in the collections of Sir Kenelm Digby, a typical figure of the age—a diplomatist, an exquisite and a sailor, a romancer in the high artificial vein, and a kind of hybrid between the alchemists who

were passing away and the scientists who were yet to be. This library of 238 MSS., written in the main by English scribes, contained a number of English books, among which may be selected for mention two thirteenth century MSS., the one containing the Moral Ode, one of the earliest Middle English poems, and the other containing, with other interesting matter, the unique copy of *Dame Siriz*, almost the only English representative of the French genre of the *fabliaux*, and the *Fox and the Wolf*, the only example in English of the animal story until Caxton's translation of *Reynard the Fox*.

The years 1635 to 1640 brought in by successive donations the vast gatherings of Archbishop Laud. The chief glory of this collection is the *Codex Laudianus* of the Acts, famous in English tradition as having possibly been used by Bede. But it contains interesting English MSS., particularly the Peterborough copy of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, and good examples of Middle English MSS. from the thirteenth century onwards.

The Selden MSS., which were in the library by 1659, are not important from the English point of view.

During the occupation of Oxford by the Parliamentary forces in 1646 Lord Fairfax had taken care to set a guard over the Bodleian Library, and in 1673 he left to it his collection of MSS., including several English books, MSS. of Chaucer, Gower, Wycliffe's Bible and others. In 1675 Christopher Lord Hatton left four volumes of Anglo-Saxon Homilies and other books, including King Alfred's translation of Pope Gregory's *Pastoral Care*, and the version of Gregory's dialogues by Werfrith, Bishop of Worcester. And the Anglo-Saxon treasures of the library were greatly increased in 1678 by a bequest from Francis Junius, who had been librarian to the Earl of Arundel. The best known of these books is Junius 11, the so-called *Cædmon Genesis*, equally interesting for

the study of Anglo-Saxon poetry and Anglo-Saxon art. Another of these MSS. is the early thirteenth century *Ormulum*, a translation of the Gospel lections by the priest Orm of high philological importance, though of little interest as literature.

Before this in 1677 Col. Edward Vernon had presented the famous Vernon MS., a vast book, in itself a whole library of the literature of the fourteenth century, which has a kind of daughter MS. in the Add. MS. 22283 in the British Museum.

Such is, in barest outline, the history of the library in the seventeenth century. Its next great accession was in 1755, when the huge collection of Richard Rawlinson, the gatherings from the auction rooms of half a century, swelled the contents of the Bodleian by upwards of 7,000 MSS. This contained chiefly in Class C and in the section, Rawlinson Poetry, a considerable quantity of English mediæval MSS., not of the first importance. The early nineteenth century brought in the collections of Richard Gough (1809), Edmond Malone (1821) and Francis Douce (1834), but these, though enriching the collection in other ways, did not materially add to its stores of important English mediæval MSS.

The history of the Bodleian Library has been told by Macray in his *Annals of the Bodleian Library*. The story of the Cambridge University Library is narrated in a book modelled on this admirable example, the late Charles Sayle's *Annals of the Cambridge University Library*. This library, which valuable though it is falls far short of the extent of the Bodleian, has nevertheless a much longer history as a continuous institution. The late Mr. H. G. Aldis in his account of the library in that valuable series, "Helps for Students of History," points out that it still possesses books bequeathed to the University in 1415, and it has been in occupation of

some part of the present buildings since 1470. In a catalogue of the MSS. drawn up in 1424 printed in the *Collected Papers* of Henry Bradshaw, there is an entry, "Boethius De consolatione philosophie. J. Croucher." This is the copy of the translation by Chaucer of the *Consolation of Philosophy*, now press-marked li.3.21, thus described by Bradshaw: "The gem of our original library is a copy of Chaucer's translation of his favourite Boethius, which must have been given to the University during the generation immediately succeeding Chaucer's death. It well deserves to be looked upon as the patriarch of the place, and the donor Mr. John Croucher to have a place in our recollections as the founder of our English Library." The great mediæval benefactor of the Library was Thomas Rotherham, Archbishop of York, who gave in 1475 some 200 MSS., many of which still remain.

We have already seen that Matthew Parker gave twenty-five MSS. to the library during his lifetime, among them some interesting Anglo-Saxon books. The greatest single addition to the collection, however, was not to come till 1715, when King George I presented the library of John Moore, Bishop of Ely, which included no less than 1,700 manuscripts, many of them containing English texts. At this same period another of the great collectors was at work. Robert Harley, first Earl of Oxford, had made the first large purchase of books for what was to be one of the most famous of libraries in 1705. By 1721 the collection had swollen to the vast number of 6,000 MSS., under the fostering care of Humfrey Wanley, who had been employed to catalogue the MSS. in 1708, and became librarian to Oxford and his son, the second earl, who maintained and continued the collection. There are books of every period of English literature down to the eighteenth century in this

large collection, and it is impossible to particularize where so much of interest is to be found.

We are now approaching the period of the foundation of the national collection. The Cotton MSS. had been made over to the nation by Sir John Cotton, third baronet, in 1700, and after some wanderings were housed with the Old Royal Library at Ashburnham House in Westminster. Here in 1731 broke out the disastrous fire which did such extensive damage to the collection. As early as 1707 there had been an idea of uniting the Royal Library, the Cotton and the Royal Society's collections together, but nothing had come of it. In 1753 the nation purchased at sums far below their real value the Harley collection and that of Sir Hans Sloane. To these the Cotton collection was added, and King George II presented the Royal MSS. in 1757. By 1759 the collections were arranged in Montagu House, Bloomsbury, and were open to public inspection. They were to be joined there later by the Arundel MSS., which had been presented to the Royal Society by a descendant of the collector and were transferred by exchange to the Museum in 1831-32.

Thus by the middle of the eighteenth century the great garnerers of MSS. had been formed very much as we know them to-day. They were to be increased by the inflow of new collections and by regular additions obtained by purchase or bequest. The later collections added to the Museum—the Birch, Lansdowne, Burney, Hargrave, and the original Egerton MSS.—brought in occasional Anglo-Saxon and Middle English MSS., but did not greatly add to the stores already in safe harbourage. On the other hand the two running series—the Additional and Egerton MSS.—have salvaged many MSS. from the chances and changes of private ownership. I have spoken hitherto of the chief public collections.

It is impossible to give here a survey of those other semi-public libraries preserved continuously in cathedrals and colleges, in universities other than the two ancient foundations, or in such monuments of the public spirit of rich merchants or their representatives as the Chetham Library and the John Rylands Library, both in Manchester. In all these places are to be found interesting MSS. bearing on English studies.

Thus there is the Exeter Book of Anglo-Saxon poetry in the Exeter Cathedral Library; Lincoln has the Thornton MS., a storehouse in itself of romantic and other literature of the fourteenth to fifteenth century period; there are some good English MSS. at Worcester, and other cathedral libraries contribute their items. Odd volumes of much interest are in such collections as the Advocates' Library at Edinburgh (now the National Library of Scotland) and the Hunterian collection at Glasgow. The MSS. in private hands, necessary though many of them are to complete the tradition of the old literature, fall outside the limits of this chapter.

We may turn now to the further question, how are these stores, so preserved for us by the piety of former times, to be used? The collecting and the cataloguing of books necessarily go together. And of many of the libraries we have had to consider early MS. catalogues exist. But until printed catalogues, properly drawn up and satisfactorily indexed, are available, it is impossible to realize the extent of our possessions or to make full use of the information so preserved. A history of the development of cataloguing would thus be a necessary supplement to a history of manuscript collecting. Here I can only give a few of the heads of that history. In 1600 Thomas James, Bodley's first librarian, published his *Ecloga Oxonio-Cantabrigiensis*, a catalogue of the

MSS. in the libraries of Oxford (excluding Bodley) and Cambridge, divided into two parts, the first arranged by libraries, the second by subjects and authors. The next important work of the kind came at the end of the seventeenth century, and recorded the vast accumulations of that century. This was the general catalogue of the MSS. in the libraries of England and Ireland published at Oxford in 1697, which we owe largely to the efforts of Edward Bernard, though many hands were at work on it. The descriptions of MSS. here vary in value, some being merely reprinted from Smith's *Ecloga*, others being supplied by local librarians of differing capacities. But the book as a whole was a great advance on anything of the kind in existence, and really opened up the manuscript treasures of English libraries. The indexes to this book were compiled by Humfrey Wanley, who was now coming to the front as a student of manuscripts. Smith's catalogue of the Cotton MSS. issued in 1696 owes its existence to the inspiration of Bernard's enterprise, and is still valuable to-day for the description of MSS. destroyed or injured in the great fire of 1731. It will be convenient to mention here a work of a kind hitherto unexampled, but of the greatest importance for English studies. In the years 1703 to 1705 appeared the *Linguarum veterum septentrionalium Thesaurus* of George Hickes, the non-juring Bishop of Thetford, a most remarkable work, which helped to contribute to the romantic revival in literature, and made additions to learning in the subjects with which it dealt which even now have not been completely realized. But from our present point of view the most interesting part of the book is the section in the second volume devoted to a catalogue of Anglo-Saxon MSS. in English libraries, by Humfrey Wanley. This is still a valuable work of reference, and points the way to the special catalogues

of subjects and languages which the advance of scholarship is now every year making more necessary.

But to return to the catalogues of miscellaneous MSS. Of the collections other than the Cottonian united to form the Museum Library of MSS. the Royal collection was described by Casley in 1734 in a most unsatisfactory work which had to serve the uses of students until the elaborate new catalogue was issued in 1921. The Cotton MSS. were once more catalogued by Planta in 1802. The catalogue of the Harley MSS. begun by Wanley was carried on by a series of scholars until it was finally published with some revision in 1809. The Sloane MSS. were catalogued by Ayscough in 1782, and a proof of a fuller catalogue of Nos. 1-1091 is preserved for reference in the Students' Room of the MS. Department. A full index was published in 1904. Ayscough's catalogue also includes the Additional MSS. down to No. 5017, the additions down to 1835 are catalogued in the Museum Reports, and after 1836 the successive catalogues of Additional MSS. describe and index the accessions both in the Additional and Egerton series. Other collections are described in separate catalogues. Lists of these catalogues and directions "How to find manuscript material in the British Museum" will be found in Mr. Gilson's *Guide to the MSS. in the British Museum* in the S.P.C.K. Helps for Students of History Series. In the same series Dr. Craster's book on the Western MSS. of the Bodleian Library will be found a very useful guide to the (to outsiders) very complicated system of references to Bodleian MSS. The seventeenth century collections in Bodley were catalogued in the first part of the first volume of Bernard's Catalogue in 1697. It may be added that the Ashmolean collection and other collections described as in private hands in Bernard have since been incorporated in



Bodley. This 1697 catalogue is still for some portions of the collection the only printed guide, but it is being superseded by the Summary Catalogue of Western MSS. In 1853 began a series of catalogues in quarto form giving detailed information. The contents of the eleven parts of this series are analysed by Dr. Craster at p. 26 of his book. The Summary Catalogue of Western MSS. begun in 1895 is supplementary to the Quarto Series. When completed it will, by description or reference, contain some account of all the MSS. in Bodley. The Quarto catalogues are indexed. The great drawback to the Summary Catalogue at present is its lack of an index, but a slip index is kept in Bodley for reference, and we are promised an index as the last volume of the series.

The MSS. of the Oxford colleges are described and indexed in Coxe's Catalogue in two volumes. For the Cambridge colleges we now have Dr. Montagu James's splendid series of catalogues, which stand in need of no eulogy or recommendation. Not all the cathedral collections have been catalogued in modern times, but we have an excellent example in Floyer's Catalogue of the Worcester Manuscripts, 1906.

In general it may be said that, although much yet remains to be done, the manuscripts of England are now generally accessible in catalogues and something like an exhaustive search for particular classes of MSS. can be undertaken with reasonable hope of success. A very valuable example of the kind of bibliographical work that can be done on this basis is the *Register of Middle English Religious Verse* undertaken by Professor Carlton Brown in 1911 and published under the auspices of the Bibliographical Society in 1916. This model work is in two volumes, the first containing a description of the MSS. under libraries, the second giving a list of the

poems treated by first lines with bibliographical references. Such a book will always admit of additions ; but it may be said that, without the preparatory work of the cataloguers of the various collections dealt with, it would have been difficult to undertake a task of this nature and vain to hope to bring it to a conclusion within so short a space of time. This book deals with both printed and unprinted material. Another bibliographical work of very great value for students of Middle English is Professor Wells's *Manual of the Writings in Middle English*. This deals in the main with printed matter, but careful references to MS. material are given, and it would be possible to extract from it a provisional catalogue of the MSS. dealing with English literature in our libraries. It is to be kept up to date by a series of periodical supplements.

From such works and the various histories of literature the student may learn the nature and extent of what has come down to us from the past. How is he to set about working on his own account ? In the first place he must learn to read ancient documents. This is not difficult. Anybody who knows Anglo-Saxon can read a MS. of that period almost at once, so beautifully clear and regular is the script. Middle English MSS. present little more difficulty, and a study of the facsimiles given by Dr. Skeat in his *Twelve English MSS.* and by Dr. Greg in his *Facsimiles from Trinity Coll. Cambr. MSS.*, and the series of facsimiles in the publications of the Old and New Palæographical Societies will familiarize the student's eye with the letter forms of the different periods. But he will learn more from actually reading a manuscript and puzzling out his difficulties for himself. Any given student will probably have some problem needing solution before he begins to read a MS. And his treatment of the MSS. will be governed by the

nature of his problem. It is impossible in the space allotted to say much that would be of use to students with many different needs, but I should like in particular to emphasize the fact that mediæval literature cannot be studied in compartments. You cannot work fruitfully at English literature of this period alone. For a full view of the questions that arise in the course of the most ordinary research into the problems, say, of an English fourteenth century poem, it is necessary to know a good deal at least of the Latin and French literatures of the Middle Ages. That is why the vast collections of MSS. with which we have been dealing are so valuable, the texts in one language and in one place throwing light on texts in other languages and other places and themselves receiving light in return. And we can never be sufficiently grateful first to the ardent collectors who made these accumulations possible, and in the second place to those scholars in different centuries who have laboured according to their lights at the heavy task of describing and elucidating the manuscripts thus brought into safe harbourage.

#### BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

The most useful books have been for the most part cited in the course of the above account, but a few additional notes may be given here. On libraries in general E. Edwards's *Memoirs of Libraries*, 1859, will still be found useful. For mediæval libraries Mr. E. A. Savage's *Old English Libraries* in *The Antiquary's Books*, 1911, concentrates a great deal of information and gives further references. The Appendix C, "List of Mediæval Collections of Books," is very handy for reference. For the wanderings of books—an important part of the subject—Dr. M. R. James's *Homes and Wanderings of Manuscripts*, S.P.C.K. Helps for Students, 1919, is a fascinating guide. The books in the same series on the British Museum and the University Libraries of Oxford and Cambridge give valuable information,

and may be supplemented by Edwards's *Lives of the Founders of the British Museum*, 1870, Macray's *Annals of the Bodleian*, and Sayle's *Annals of the Cambridge University Library*. The MSS. of the Oxford colleges are dealt with in H. O. Coxe's *Catalogue*, 1852, and Dr. James's catalogues of the Cambridge college libraries are of course indispensable. It is impossible to detail the catalogues of the smaller collections throughout the country, but a general reference may be given to the Reports of the Historical Manuscripts Commission, where many of them are described more or less completely.

# IX

## A SPECIALIST LIBRARY FOR ART

BY G. H. PALMER, B.A., F.S.A.

*Keeper of the Library, Victoria and Albert Museum*



## A SPECIALIST LIBRARY FOR ART

BY G. H. PALMER, B.A., F.S.A.

*Keeper of the Library, Victoria and Albert Museum*

THERE are several libraries in London exclusively devoted to art, and specially organized for the use of practising artists and of students of art and the history of art. Among these are the Library of the Royal Academy (for the Fine Arts), the Library of the Royal Institute of British Architects and the smaller but useful Library of the Architectural Association (for Architecture), and the Library of the Burlington Fine Arts Club, which is more general in its scope. Appropriately, as it is the home of the Slade School, the Library of University College includes a Fine Art Library, as well as the Edwards Library for students of Egyptian Art. The joint Library of the Hellenic Society and the Society for the promotion of Roman Studies is a valuable one for students of Classical Art, and for the antiquarian study of art there is the Library of the Society of Antiquaries. Special mention must also be made of the Library of Reproductions of Paintings and Drawings formed by Sir Robert and Lady Witt, in their home in Portman Square, to which they so generously admit all students of art, and of the more general collection of reproductions brought together by Sir Martin Conway.

None of these, however, rivals in scope and extent the Library of the Victoria and Albert Museum, which is

the subject of this chapter. It is still the national art library, though this is no longer its official title. For its beginning, it is necessary to go back to the year 1837, when it was started, as a necessary element of art-education, in connexion with the Government School of Design, established in that year at Somerset House under the Board of Trade. When the Department of Practical Art was formed in 1852 and granted the use, temporarily, of Marlborough House, the Library was moved there and became, what it has since continued to be, a part of the Museum. Previously, its growth had been slow, and at that time, when it was first made available to the public, it contained only about 1,500 volumes and portfolios of prints, drawings, etc. In 1857-58, when the Museum was transferred from Marlborough House to South Kensington, there were in it nearly 6,000 volumes, 2,000 prints and drawings, and more than 1,000 photographs. From that time it increased very rapidly, so that, when the gallery which, with additional storage, it still occupies, was completed in 1884, it comprised more than 60,000 volumes, 65,000 prints and drawings and 50,000 photographs. When the Museum was rearranged, after the completion of the new buildings in 1909, the prints and drawings were withdrawn to form a separate Department of the Museum, and the collection of Bookbindings, formerly treated as a Museum collection, was transferred to the Library, which now contains about 160,000 volumes and 250,000 photographs.

As to its scope, it includes books on æsthetics, on the origins and principles of art, and on art appreciation. It is rich in the literature of the Fine Arts of Architecture, Sculpture, and Painting, and neither in these nor in its other sections is it restricted to the field, in some cases a limited one, covered by the Museum collections.



Next to the Fine Arts may be mentioned the arts of reproduction, the various forms of engraving and etching on metal, woodcuts and wood-engraving, lithography and kindred processes, and finally modern processes with the help of photography and science. In addition to these, the Library covers the whole field of applied and decorative art, which may be divided into classes, as follows: (1) the Ceramic Arts: pottery and porcelain, glass, including stained glass and enamels; (2) Furniture and Woodwork, with leather work and wall-papers, though the latter are placed, in the Museum, in the Department of Engraving; (3) Metal Work: gold- and silver-smiths' work, Sheffield plate, ironwork, bronze, brass, copper, pewter, etc., with special sections for arms and armour, coins and medals, and seals; (4) Textiles: woven stuffs, tapestry, carpets, embroidery, printed stuffs, lace, etc., with a separate section for costume. Books on Ornament in general: historic ornament, the principles of ornament, pattern-designing, etc., form a section by themselves; books on mural and decorative painting go in the Painting class, books on cameos and engraved gems form a separate section following Sculpture, and there is a separate section for Portraits, painted (including miniatures), sculptured, or engraved. Music is not within the scope of the Library, but since musical instruments are included as examples of fine woodwork and decoration in the Department of Woodwork and Furniture in the Museum, there are books on such instruments in the Library.

Much information on art, the lives of artists, and individual works of art is to be found in certain classes of topographical books, and much is provided by accounts preserved in public or private archives, and often by inventories and wills. The Library therefore acquires printed collections of such documents, when they

contain much matter of artistic interest, and it has some originals. It is rich in catalogues of public and private collections and of exhibitions of works of art, as also in catalogues of auction sales of art collections, to which further reference will be made later. These catalogues often enable the history of an object to be traced back a long way.

The Library not only contains a large collection of periodicals devoted to art in general or to some form of art or artistic industry, but it includes also a very extensive collection of transactions and journals of antiquarian and archæological societies. In these is to be found a great deal of art literature of the greatest value to specialists, and in fact to all serious students of art.

In this as in other parts of the Library, books in all languages have been and are acquired. It is recognized that an art book may often be exceedingly valuable, on account of its illustrations, even to students unable to read the text.

Special attention is devoted to the arts of book production, viz. the writing and illumination of manuscripts, fine printing, the decoration and illustration of the printed book, and bookbinding. More will be said about these when dealing with the exhibition space allotted to the Library in the galleries of the Museum.

It is natural that an art library should contain books on the artistic treatment of heraldry; but a visitor who has not realized how frequently heraldry and genealogy enable the expert to ascertain with certainty the date of an art object and the personal associations that add so much both to its interest and to its commercial value might be surprised at the extent to which this section has been developed, justifiably as experience has proved. A classified list of the section published in 1901 shows

how comprehensive and useful a collection it is. The identification of subjects represented in art is also an important matter; so the Library contains books on mythology, sacred and profane history, iconography (especially Christian iconography) and symbolism, books of emblems, etc., and the full texts of a number of classical and other works that have been much used by artists.

Both in its general sections and in those devoted to single branches of art the Library contains books on appreciation and æsthetics, where such exist, on materials and technique, collections of patterns, etc., histories of the branch of art in general or in restricted periods or areas, biographies of artists, collections of reproductions, catalogues of public and private collections, auction sale catalogues, catalogues of exhibitions, periodicals, and bibliographies.

It must have been realized ere this that the student of art needs more books than those only on art. The student of æsthetics needs to go to books on philosophy, books on materials and technique have to be largely scientific, and science is in other ways necessary to the artist, legal knowledge is often useful to him, and the student of art history must have a general historical background to his special studies. Generally the dividing line will be easily understood, but in our Library it is drawn especially sharply in the case of Science, as the Science Library is in the adjoining Science Museum, only just across the road. The Art Library has books on construction specially written for the use of architects, but leaves the bulk of the books on structural engineering to the Science Library; it includes special books on stones as building materials, but it does not trespass into geological literature; it has books on the science of colour, cloud-forms, reflections, etc., specially written

for the guidance of painters, but it restricts itself to them. In the field of technique, it leaves the definitely scientific treatment of a subject, when divorced from its artistic side, to the Science Library. For instance, the Transactions of both the English and the American Ceramic Societies will be found not in the Art but in the Science Library. So in its Anatomy section, the Library contains only books on anatomy written for the use of artists. On the other hand it has a selection of botanical and zoological works for the sake of their fine illustrations, which provide material for the use of designers and other artists.

The Library is for reference use only. Its two public rooms provide accommodation for 125 readers. In the east room, the reading room proper, adjustable supports for books, ink and writing materials are provided at most of the seats, and the current parts of a number of important periodicals are set out for inspection. The inner room contains the catalogue and subject index, issue desk and a number of reference books on open shelves which all readers may consult without making application for them. Here, too, recent acquisitions are exhibited. Tables are provided in this room for the consultation of photographs and exceptionally big books, and for students who wish to make large drawings or to use water-colours. Several of these tables have large adjustable slopes, with upward extensions which are also available when required.

Any visitor to the Museum over eighteen years of age is admitted to the Library to consult ordinary reference books or textbooks, on signing his or her name and address at the entrance to the Reading Room, but anyone who wishes to have the full use of the collections must, unless the holder of a current ticket of admission to the Reading Room of the British Museum, or card of member-

ship of the National Art Collections fund, obtain a ticket of admission to the Library. Application for a ticket must be made in writing to the Director and Secretary of the Victoria and Albert Museum, stating the purpose for which admission is desired and enclosing a written recommendation, based on personal knowledge, from a householder. Students under eighteen years of age must apply through the head of their school or some other qualified person who can certify that they are competent to benefit from independent study, or that their work in the Library will be directed by their teachers. The tickets are issued for one year and are renewable.

The catalogue, an author catalogue, is in two sections. The Universal Catalogue of Books on Art (3 volumes, 1870-75), and a series of Supplements, containing only books added to the Library itself, are incorporated into one alphabet in a series of volumes, to form the catalogue down to August 1890. Among the Universal Catalogue titles, those of books actually in the Library are distinguished by having a press-mark beside them in the margin. The other catalogue, on cards, contains books acquired after August 1890, together with a number of revised entries transferred to it from the older volume catalogue. It is consequently necessary, for books printed before September 1890, to refer to both the volume catalogue and the card catalogue. For the assistance of readers who do not know beforehand the title of a book giving the information they need, there are a rough manuscript index to the volume catalogue, a series of classified subject-lists, which has not been continued since the issue of the Heraldry list in 1901, and a very complete subject index, in loose-leaf volumes, to the books acquired in and since 1904. This index is kept up to date, concurrently with the author catalogue,

and is now of the greatest possible value to students. References to important articles in the various periodical publications taken by the Library were included in the card catalogue and the subject index until this work had to be given up during the War. It has not yet been possible to resume it to more than a limited extent.

Three further hand-lists can be consulted at the catalogue counter. One of them is a list of the periodicals and transactions taken by the Library. The second is an index to the names of owners of collections sold at Christie's since 1859. The Library has a considerable number of Christie catalogues of earlier date; but from 1859 it has a complete set, with the price realized inserted against each lot, and the purchaser's name. The third list (in progress) is of exhibition catalogues. The London section of these which is complete receives special attention. It includes not only the larger annual and special exhibitions, but a very full collection of catalogues of one-man shows and small exhibitions at dealers' and the other lesser galleries. There are three less important supplements to the volume catalogue: of sale catalogues, catalogues of collections, and official publications of the Department of Science and Art. Since August 1890 all such publications (except the priced set of Christie catalogues) are included in the card catalogue.

The large size of a great proportion of the books in the Library would make "open access" almost impossible, even if the nature of the building and the height of much of the shelving did not preclude any thought of it. This being the case, the catalogue and subject index are made as helpful as possible, and great attention has been devoted to the selection of the limited number of volumes immediately accessible to readers on open reference shelves in the Reading Room. These shelves contain a copy of the Oxford English Dictionary, a collec-

tion of dictionaries of foreign languages, a copy of the last two editions of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, the *Biographie Universelle*, the *Dictionary of National Biography*, Ulysse Chevallier's *Bio-bibliographie* and other general biographical reference books, a very extensive series of biographical dictionaries of artists, dictionaries of artists' monograms and collectors' marks, dictionaries of classical, Christian, prehistoric, and oriental antiquities, gazetteers, Chevallier's *Topo-Bibliographie*, dictionaries of dates, dictionaries of art terms, genealogists' guides, peerages, Burke's *Landed Gentry*, records of auction sale prices, art bibliographies, the British Museum subject index, the English Catalogue, *Book Prices Current*, F. de Mély and E. Bishop's *Bibliographie générale des inventaires imprimés* (1892-95); an extensive series of bibliographies of various branches of art; indexes of periodical literature such as Poole's Index, the Subject Index to Periodicals (the art section), the *Répertoire d'Art et d'Archéologie*, issued by the *Bibliothèque d'Art et d'Archéologie*, founded by M. Doucet and now administered by the University of Paris, Gomme's Index to Archæological Papers, 1665-1890 (1907), and annual indexes, 1891-1907 (1892-1908); R. de Lasteyrie and E. Lefèvre Pontalis, *Bibliographie des travaux historiques et archéologiques* (1888 et seq.), A. L. Jellinek, *Internationale Bibliographie der Kunstwissenschaft* (1902-13), etc. In addition to these combined indexes, the index volumes of a great many of the more important art magazines and sets of transactions are set out on the open shelves. Having these accessible is very helpful to students, but it is perhaps even more important for them to know that they may count upon receiving every possible assistance from the Library staff.

At the present time such assistance is more definitely necessary to those who wish to consult the collection of

Photographs. This collection, about a quarter of a million in number, covers the same ground as the collection of books. The photographs are arranged, according to subject, in the following classes: Anatomy; Architecture and Topography; Armour and Weapons; Books (printed and in manuscript); Brasses and Incised Slabs; Carts, Carriages, Harness, and Horse Furniture; Ceramics (pottery and porcelain); Clocks, Watches, and Sundials; Coins and Medals; Construction, Machinery, etc.; Costume; Drawings; Enamels; Etching and Engraving; Furniture, Wood- and Leather-work; Gardens; Gems (cameos and engraved); Glass; Gold- and Silver-smiths' Work; Heraldry; Lettering; Metal Work (other than gold and silver); Miniatures and Silhouettes; Mosaics and Inlays; Mural Painting; Musical Instruments; Ornament; Pageants and Plays; Painting; Photographic Studies of Human Figures, Plants, Animals, Cloud-forms, etc.; Playing Cards; Portraits from Life; Posters; Sculpture; Seals; Shipping; Textiles; War Photographs; and a small collection of specimens of various photographic processes of reproduction. It will be noticed that, in addition to the illustrations of works of art, photographs of natural objects, etc., are included as they provide material for artists or designers working in the Library. Some of the classes are very small in comparison with others, but the full list is given to show the scope of the collection.

The different classes enumerated above are subdivided into groups and sorted into order in those groups. The subdivision and the order in sorting in the subsections vary in the different classes. It can be seen that all could not be treated in the same way. Such classes as Painting, Sculpture, Drawings, are divided according to nationality, and sorted in each national section alphabetically under the artists' names. Architectural photo-



graphs are sorted topographically, those of each country being arranged alphabetically under the names of places, while other classes like Furniture are sorted, under each country, into groups: beds, chairs, chests, cupboards, tables, etc. The photographs are mounted, by the dry-mounting process, on thin linen-backed cards, of three standard sizes for storage in boxes on shelves. Photographs too large for the boxes are kept in portfolios and stored flat.

Printed indexes of three of the smaller classes can be consulted, and a general index is in preparation. The typewriting of this in loose-leaf volumes has been commenced, and the remainder, so far as it has been completed, in MS. on slips, can be consulted on application. A hand-list to the painters and draughtsmen represented has recently been completed. It is, however, sufficient for a visitor to ask for the works of an artist, views of a place or building, or illustrations of a class of object, in order to obtain what the Library is able to supply to meet his needs, or be told that it is not to be found in the collection.

It may be mentioned here that the Museum owns nearly 50,000 negatives, mainly of objects in its own collections, but including some of objects that have been lent to it at different times, and others of important works which its official photographer has been allowed to photograph, such as stained glass in Canterbury Cathedral and Westminster Abbey, etc. Prints from these negatives can be obtained at a moderate charge, and a number of postcards are also on sale at the Museum.

The Library has exhibition space in the Museum. In the west gallery of Room 75 a technical exhibit illustrating the handicrafts of type-founding, printing and bookbinding has been arranged, and in Room 74 an exhibition of book production is to be seen. This is

divided into three sections, the first of which is devoted to illuminated and other manuscripts, the second to the printed book, book decoration and book illustration, from the fifteenth century to the present time, the third to bookbindings. In the space round a well to the east of the main gallery are shown selections from various sections of the Library, including lettering and writing books, lace and embroidery pattern books, early books on architecture, painting, and engraving, books on metal work and furniture, liturgical books, miniature books (including a number lent by Her Majesty the Queen), illustrated books of the 'sixties, the latter supplemented by framed drawings on the walls belonging to the Department of Engraving. Other MSS. are to be seen in the Salting and Currie Bequests (Rooms 128 and 105), some important enamelled bindings in the South Court (Room 39), and ivory covers, or panels for covers, in Room 64.

It is important to mention, in conclusion, that the Museum contains also two important Bequest Libraries, of a kind that one would not expect to find included in its collections. These, the Dyce and Forster Libraries (about 35,000 volumes), are of great value for the student of English Literature. The Dyce Library is especially rich in Elizabethan and seventeenth century dramatic literature, and the Forster in English literature and English history from the seventeenth century until about 1870. A small selection from the treasures of the two Bequests is exhibited in Rooms 83 and 84; it includes one very important artistic item, three notebooks of Leonardo da Vinci, belonging to the Forster Bequest.

The Library is open on weekdays during the same hours as the Museum. As already explained, it is a reference Library only, and no books or photographs belonging to it can be lent.

X

THE LIBRARY RESOURCES OF LONDON

BY C. R. SANDERSON

*Librarian, National Liberal Club*



## THE LIBRARY RESOURCES OF LONDON

BY C. R. SANDERSON

*Librarian, National Liberal Club*

MR. BIRRELL once began an address by saying that he rose on the spur of six months' notice. Such extended notice has one dreadful result—it gives time for the full realization of the difficulties of a set task. I am to show you the library resources of London, show them to you in a single chapter, interest you although I must omit so many of the nicest, the best, the most attractive libraries, because these have been shown to you in other chapters already. As a result, the bounds of time and the institutions to which I am temporarily to have the key are two factors which would delimit my parade if what I attempted were to be a conducted tour. Actually, what I really must do is to link up with other chapters in this book, lest it appear that we think the libraries of London are covered when we have discussed only a few of the most prominent ones. And in order to do this I must sketch out for you some idea of that vast fund of books which London possesses, and try to group them together so that we may get some impression of this particular aspect of the wealth of London, wealth other than and greater than that of Lombard Street.

For the working details of the libraries we shall mention, I must refer you to other authorities. Mr. Rye's handbook to the libraries of London<sup>1</sup> is a detailed

<sup>1</sup> *The Libraries of London: a Guide for Students.* By R. A. Rye. 1910.

survey which you should know well ; and another work now under preparation, the anxiously awaited Directory of Special Libraries, will very soon provide us with an "Inquire Within," not only for London but for the rest of the country as well.

As you will see before we get very far in our survey, books there are in almost overflowing measure and on every conceivable topic. Our only difficulty is how to find our way to them and among them. Of general libraries there is little need for talk ; the libraries towards which we require guidance are of two kinds. One takes some prescribed branch of knowledge as its special field and thereto devotes the whole of its resources and energies ; the other, while covering the general ground, looks generously upon one section which it more particularly develops. "Rye" and the "Directory" together will give us a much larger entry.

So far as London is concerned, in mentally grouping these libraries, we may with some reason and with more convenience begin with the group of State Libraries ; and, starting at the top of the hierarchy, mention with a little pride, and with a little regret, the libraries of the Houses of Parliament. With some pride, because as medium-sized reference libraries they do their particular work so effectively ; with some regret on account of their exclusiveness. Through this aloofness, and in a kind of Gentlemen *v.* Players attitude, we have under one roofing two libraries each serving a separate "estate of the realm," and through this, also, these libraries are inaccessible to the public at large. This exclusiveness is, however, by no means of a niggardly character. The two "estates" use each other's library, though as an act of courtesy and not as a right, and the House of Commons Library is open to a student by the permission of the Speaker. Moreover, certain papers of an official

character, which are not available elsewhere, may be consulted there. But the fact remains that owing to their constitution, and probably in order to secure the effectiveness of their work, the libraries are accessible to the world outside only in a very limited degree. And yet it would be most unjust if I did not say that again and again I have received every kindness and found every willingness to be of help when I have appealed to the librarians of these libraries for assistance. Many of you will remember that it was in the House of Commons Library that Parnell got his real introduction to books. Books had not been plentiful in his early life, and when he came to be the leader of his party in the House of Commons and was fighting coercion, he keenly felt the lack of a knowledge of history. Barry O'Brien, in his *Life of Parnell*, says he spent hours walking up and down the lobbies of the House telling Parnell all he could, until Parnell exclaimed :

“ “ Can I get all this in books ? You see I am very ignorant. I am very quick, though, at picking up things.” I named some books to him. “ All right,” he said, “ I will go into the Library and get them. We will look through them together.” He went to the Library, and soon returned with the books. We stood at the little desk close to the door leading into the Reading Room. He plunged into the books, marking with blue pencil the passages that specially interested him. “ Do they allow you to mark books here ? ” I asked, observing that he was disfiguring the pages in the most reckless fashion. “ I don't know,” was the answer, with the air of a man who thought the question quite irrelevant.’

Even the librarian of the House of Commons must have his days of tribulation.

As we might expect, the two libraries largely reflect the distinction in the spheres of activity of the two Houses. It is to the House of Lords Library that we

should turn for the legal side (the library of the appellate House); to the House of Commons Library for questions of finance. Neither library, of course, restricts its sphere to these subjects, but throughout this chapter we are concerned with the special and not with the general.

For further specialized topics we must look to the departmentalized libraries, that is, the libraries of the separate Government departments. We cannot mention them all, but we should be unwise if we did not spare time for a comment on a few of them.

The Foreign Office possesses a fine library of not only British state papers, but those of foreign governments as well; state papers covering laws, finance, trade, tariffs, emigration, and all such topics. Biographical material there is in abundance, contemporary pamphlets no longer accessible elsewhere, and standard works of all kinds especially leaning towards government, diplomacy, politics, economics, and statistics. Officially the library is not acknowledged to be accessible to the outsider, but in the confidence of my readers I may tell a secret by saying that this is largely because there is such restricted accommodation for students. A properly recommended inquirer will find a most sympathetic librarian, to whom most things are possible, although the library contains much confidential information in the way of contemporary state archives which we should not be allowed to use. These archives or official papers are kept at the Foreign Office in files for about twenty years; then they are transferred (still as confidential documents) to the custody of the Record Office, that state repository which is the subject of one of these chapters. Eventually they are made accessible to the public and, as you know, the forward date to which the archives are now accessible is 1878.



In the Foreign Office Library we get an excellent example of what we know as really progressive librarianship—that type of librarianship where the librarian is not merely the collector of his material, not merely the custodian and arranger of it, but also the capable exploiter. The Foreign Office Library is a kind of information bureau producing memoranda, often on most involved topics, for the benefit of its own Department. This is exactly the kind of work done by what we call specialist libraries, by our modern reference libraries, and by our commercial libraries. More than this, the Foreign Office Library acts as a kind of clearing house for information required and provided elsewhere. The Minister of Agriculture in Roumania may put forward an inquiry concerning a breed of fine, fat, black pigs in Derbyshire about which he has heard, or some Minister in Czechoslovakia may want the fullest information he can get concerning the police system of London. The inquiry comes through the official channels and passes through the hands of the librarian of the Foreign Office, who obtains what is required and forwards it. Of the material available in the Foreign Office Library itself, a fine catalogue has recently been published. It covers some 1,600 pages and the entries under each subject-heading are arranged in chronological order, an excellent device for a library of this character.

The War Office and the Admiralty Libraries are departmental in a narrower sense. A good idea of the scope of the former and of its work can be obtained from that most genial of librarianship books *Warriors in Undress*, by Mr. Hudleston, the librarian of the War Office. The Admiralty Library is world-famous for its naval history, and for its maps and charts. Though it is largely restricted to the use of the Department and to naval officers, exceptions are not infrequently granted.

The Board of Education Library covers a wider sphere of general effectiveness. It is a great educational library, concerning itself not only with strictly educational treatises, but also with the offshoots or the supports (you choose the more suitable term according to your attitude), such as psychology, ethics, logic, social science, hygiene, etc. It deals with methods of teaching and not with textbooks of the subjects taught, but it has a wide appeal because it is primarily a library for the student of education. The idea of a Departmental Library being created and maintained even principally for the use of its own particular Government Department here takes second place; the student comes first, though the actual accommodation provided is not really ideal. The library is a reference library, like that of the Colonial Office also, and books may not be taken away. It is arranged according to a decimal classification of its own (the work of Mr. Twentyman), and the scheme has been printed and circulated as a Government publication.

The Ministry of Agriculture Library widens its appeal in its special line still further. Many, if not most, of the books may be borrowed, three at a time, and may be kept for fourteen days, the condition being primarily that carriage shall be paid. The Ministry has also a monthly *Bulletin*, in which additions to the library are set out, and in which periodicals are analysed and suitable contents brought to notice. Every branch of agriculture is covered: economics, crops, pests, fruit, live stock, buildings, engineering, veterinary science, poultry, bees, all are included. And the library should be of added interest to the library student because it is one of the few places in London where the Brussels Expansion of the Dewey system of classification is carried out in the administration. The subject catalogue is arranged under

the Brussels Expansion, although the books are shelved under an adaptation of Brown's subject classification.

The India Office Library is one of the oldest Departmental Libraries, for it had its nucleus in the old East India Company. It is a learned library and possesses the finest collection of Indian literature in Europe, and perhaps one of the finest collections of oriental literature that exist. It is available for reference purposes, but the signing of a simple application form and the providing of the required recommendation give borrowing powers for twelve months. It has a set of printed catalogues.

The Ministry of Labour possesses our newest large departmental library. The Library was established with the Ministry in 1917, but as duties were transferred to the Department by Orders in Council (as provided in the establishment Statute) there came with these duties large collections of material from other Departments for incorporation in the library. As a modern establishment it conforms with modern practice. Dewey was adopted, every item was fully catalogued, fugitive material was related to textbook material. The material is, however, largely regarded as being of a confidential character, though exceptions are sometimes made by admitting non-Government users. But here again, it would be a knavish trick not to add that a justifiable inquiry will be met with every courtesy from the officials concerned. I have personally received the greatest help from the chief officials of the Statistics Branch when I have frequently turned to them in time of need.

Several other of the State Libraries possess features of interest to us. Those of the Ministry of Health, the Board of Trade, and the Department of Overseas Trade are all rich in works within their respective spheres. The Board of Trade Library has a considerable collection of

rare items on various aspects of trade, including some statements of prices current at the time of Charles II ; the Department of Overseas Trade makes a speciality of foreign and colonial publications on all matters affecting industry and overseas trade, including a particularly wide range of directories and annuals from all quarters of the globe. All three libraries are open to *bona fide* inquirers, and the librarians are always ready to help the student over a stile in his quest for information.

There are many other Government libraries which we must leave, but one very excellent library far too little known is that of the Imperial Institute at South Kensington. It is not, as is often thought, a part of the University, but is the library of the Imperial Institute itself, and aims at assisting the fullest utilization of the raw materials produced in the Colonies, and at circulating information concerning the economic resources of the Empire. It possesses a Technical Information Bureau, a Reference Library, a Map Room, a Reading Room, and a staff willing to help any properly recommended inquirer who goes with a legitimate inquiry.

We come now to the non-Government libraries, and perhaps as *primus inter pares* we should place the London Library. Of its interesting origin we can be reminded by looking again at Frederic Harrison's monograph,<sup>1</sup> and you do not need me to tell you that it is the finest lending library in the country. True, it is limited to subscribers, but the fee is not an impossible one, and the borrowing facilities which are granted are as generous as the treatment of delinquents is lenient. It is, of course, a general library, but as a supplement to the resources of other libraries there is an enormous fund of out-of-the-way reference books. Such books are rarely wanted, but when they are wanted the need is great,

<sup>1</sup> *Carlyle and the London Library*. Edited by Frederic Harrison. 1907.

for the information contained in them can be obtained from no modern substitute. Here also are many sets of periodicals as scarce as they are long, pamphlets, official papers, and other material of such a nature that it is out of the reach of the purse and space of the average library.

It is a sad thing that, officially, the library may not be used by other libraries as a reservoir upon which they may draw in their need, for the London Library recognizes only individual subscribers, and does not countenance second-hand borrowing nor acknowledge the "fictitious person" of legal phraseology. Yet, to mix metaphors, out of the kindness of its heart it will often turn its blind eye when an official of another library applies for personal membership and borrowing powers.

To branch off into theory for one moment, the London Library is a magnificent professional object-lesson. It shows what a central repository could do to supplement the reference stock of the ordinary library; how much money, space, and work could be economized by the provision of a repository such as we believe the Central Library for Students will ultimately become. Not only would it contain books generally termed the "lending" type, but also it would distribute the established "reference" material now always so difficult for the smaller reference libraries to obtain, even at second-hand, for their readers.

Next we may place the Guildhall Library. I claim no justification for placing it second to any, other than that of convenience of grouping; placed here it leads us on more easily to other public libraries free to all. As we know, it is a fifteenth century foundation, linked, through his executors, with Dick Whittington's fame. It had dark days under Protector Somerset, who was a borrower

in his time, borrowing not one book, but most of the library, and borrowing it permanently. The Great Fire finished the rest. But this should not disturb any belief we have in the ultimate plans of Providence, even though it was not until the first quarter of the nineteenth century that the library was refounded. Originally it had mainly been devoted to theology; but with the new foundation came a great change which deprives Somerset and the Great Fire of their tragic incidence in connexion with the library. The purchases were now ordered to be works concerning the manners, customs, laws, privileges, topography, and history of the City of London and its neighbourhood, and this is where the special strength and import of the Guildhall Library lies for us. It provides, too, a piece of constructive administration of particularly interesting professional importance, for the classification of the vast London collection has, under the librarianship of Mr. Bernard Kettle, been worked out, not on theoretical lines, but on the actual material to be arranged. In addition to the enormous number of general works there is also a commercial library (perhaps the earliest to be established in the country); and the Guildhall Library took upon itself an added democracy by the adoption of the Libraries Acts in 1922. Previously the library had been maintained out of corporate income without any charge falling upon the City rates.

With the Guildhall Library should go some mention of three other endowed public libraries which were established by the Charity Commissioners some thirty years ago under the City of London Parochial Charities Act. These three endowment-maintained libraries are for people living or employed in the City, the Cripplegate Institute serving the western half, the Bishopsgate Institute serving the eastern half (both happily preserving

the names of ancient London landmarks), and the St. Bride Foundation being devoted exclusively to the subject (widely defined) of printing.

The Cripplegate Institute reacts to its own district's needs. Its reference department is particularly strong in art as applied to the manufacture of textile fabrics, for its district is the centre of what are called the Manchester trades, that is, millinery, artificial flowers, ladies' garments, etc. This is not the only special feature; there is also a good commercial library, and the literary facilities are without doubt considerably popularized by the other activities of the Institute. These activities include classes in technical subjects, and mid-day dinner-hour concerts. The Cripplegate Institute has one other feature—it is a public library with a tea-room; tea can be obtained for 2*d.*, and buttered toast, that splendid illuminator of books, is provided for 2½*d.*

The Bishopsgate Institute, the eastern counterpart of the Cripplegate foundation, is notable for its collection of books dealing with the history and topography of London. The third endowment, the St. Bride Foundation, really found the origin of its library in that of William Blades, the biographer of Caxton. On the death of Blades, his library was acquired for the yet unbuilt institute. To bring the collection up to date in more recent typographical history and textbooks, Passmore Edwards, the great benefactor of public libraries in pre-Carnegie days, gave a large sum of money, and as a result the library now aims at being as complete as possible both on the historical and practical side. It covers letterpress printing, engraving, lithography, process work, and all methods of illustration.

Dr. Williams's Library, dating from the eighteenth century, is another well-known endowed library, largely theological and philosophical, and sufficiently rich in

sets of periodicals to make it more than a general library. Anyone in the United Kingdom can borrow from its resources on production of a satisfactory introduction and a guarantee.

There are many other libraries which must be passed over in our rapid survey and again left to the care of Mr. Rye. But two other theological and historical collections may be mentioned in passing, that of Lambeth Palace Library, which is open to the public for reference and from which modern works may be borrowed on certain conditions, and Sion College Library, mainly used by clergymen.

Then come the public libraries proper, and by that we mean, of course, those libraries which are not only used free by the public, but which are also maintained out of rate income. In number they are really so many that any attempt at a survey of all of them, even without discussing them in sequence, would remind you of an incident which took place quite recently in a London theatre. One of the characters had to repeat : "I abhor you, I abhor you." He was not a prepossessing character, and his particular enunciation seemed to curtail the phrase until it appeared to be a trisyllable. The result was a rejoinder from the more elevated portion of the house : "Yes, and you bore us too."

Very briefly, therefore, let me summarize the position by saying that all the metropolitan boroughs have now adopted the Libraries Acts, and are carrying them out with varying degrees of generosity or parsimony. There are some 90 to 100 public libraries within the administrative county, and consequently there is a general library available within reasonable distance from any point you like to take within that area. Actually the lending libraries of the different boroughs restrict their activities practically to their own districts, though there



is some little exchange of borrowing facilities. The reference libraries, in contradistinction, are everywhere accessible to anyone. To-day there is a very important movement (more accurately it should be called a revival of a movement) for co-operation and co-ordination between the public libraries of London. Many theories have been advanced, radical regrouping has been suggested; but the feeling is gradually making headway (and at length finding realization along practical lines) that increased effectiveness should be obtained by mutual concessions between the various library systems. This is a highly important tendency which will make for true economies, increased book provision, and a better organization of our resources. It is, however, merely primary co-ordination, and though it would represent a vast improvement on existing conditions, there are definite limits to the advantages which can accrue. So long as the co-operation is between a group of general libraries working together, they provide not exactly the same books, but at any rate varied books covering the same general ground, and the fullest results from this organized co-ordination will come only when each library system, in addition to providing general collections, also attempts to specialize in some particular department of knowledge.

The step forward is not so large a stride as might be imagined. Almost every public library system is reacting to some one or other local influence, and, as we know, "special collections" are no new thing. Quite naturally, almost inevitably, a library in an industrial area tends to strengthen more particularly that section which deals with local industries. The localization of industry is represented in the character of the library. We saw it in the case of the Cripplegate Institute. At Shoreditch there is a well-known collection dealing with furniture and the allied trades. Here a strengthened section has

been developed until it has become a specialized collection, and Shoreditch now maintains probably the finest collection of books to be found anywhere in the country so far as furniture, cabinet-making, French-polishing, home-furnishing, wood-carving, and similar related topics are concerned. And not only books, but also relevant periodicals, foreign matter as well as English, are included.

Along similar lines Bethnal Green is developing a tailoring and a furniture section; Acton an engineering section; Bermondsey a leather section; Finsbury a commercial section. And so the list could be continued.

It is interesting to note how generally the need for the conscious organization of such specialization is being felt. We may take an excellent illustration from Lancashire. In the Mitchell Report<sup>1</sup> it is stated that proposals have been made whereby three Lancashire towns shall each specialize (in addition to each providing a general library) in one of three industries common to the group: cotton, engineering, and paper-making. It is proposed that each library shall stress one of these sections to the full extent of its purse, and that all three shall give borrowing powers to one another—in other words pool their special collections for the common benefit. The deliberate organization of such departmentalized or team work would open up an enormously enlarged vista of the ultimate benefits certain to come in the wake of inter-library co-operation.

In other places a public library has often seized upon a point of local association and formed a special collection around it. Obvious London examples of this are at Chiswick (the Chiswick Press collection), Twickenham

<sup>1</sup> *The Public Library System of Great Britain and Ireland, 1921-23.* A report prepared for the Carnegie United Kingdom Trustees by the secretary, J. M. Mitchell. 1924.

(the Alexander Pope collection—Pope is buried in Twickenham churchyard), Woolwich (the Blake collection). Or again, the acquisition of the nucleus of a special collection may in a way have been accidental; but having acquired, either by purchase or gift, say a particular person's specialized library, the public library continues to build upon this excellent foundation. Thus we have the Henry Morley library which passed into the possession of Hampstead and has given rise in the public library there to a much-extended collection rich in first and early editions of standard writers of the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries. It includes the only known "first" of Lyly's *Euphues*, the Dilke collection of Keats relics, and a library of literature relating to Keats and his circle.

Another kind of specializing comes from the fact that very many public libraries have made a "local" collection, gathering together and making accessible all material having any relationship with local history. There are so many examples that it would be unjust to particularize, except perhaps by reminding you of the already mentioned analogous work done by the Guildhall, which possesses the greatest "local" collection in the country. At the same time, it is worth saying, as an example of the very varied origin of this important work now carried out in public libraries all over the country, that the local collection at Willesden had its birth in the enthusiasm of a chairman of the Libraries Committee. He was keenly interested in tracing the history of the land upon which Willesden now stands, and in the course of his inquiries he collected many deeds and documents which later he allowed to pass into the possession of the public library. The library has gone on building upon this foundation. It is of some interest to note also that the librarian is making a collection of local process-blocks,

and whenever any illustration appears concerning the locality, he begs the gift or custody of the process-block by which the illustration was reproduced.

These, then, are examples of the many types of specialization to be found in our London public libraries. The work is capable of almost infinite development. There is not a library without an opportunity of doing its quota of the work which (I hope we shall agree) is of much more than merely local importance. The ideal which librarianship has in view is that by each library pulling its full weight in this manner, and by a sharing of the added facilities thus provided, we shall ultimately have a national pool from which all can draw in their need and to which all will contribute in their turn.

And now let us look in another direction for a moment. Scattered throughout London we have an enormous number of separate institutional libraries. For particulars of the institutions themselves we can usefully turn to *The Year-book of the Scientific and Learned Societies*; but unfortunately this work gives no indication of the collections of books possessed by the different societies. Yet we shall not be far wrong if we assume that practically every one of the societies has its own material, even if not all of them have the glorious heritage of the fine libraries possessed by the older bodies. In case of need, then, whenever detailed and specialized information is required (information that is beyond the scope of an ordinary library), we might well say: "Thence to the society." Whether it be mountaineering (the Alpine Club), Insects (the Entomological Society), Freemasonry (Grand Lodge), Scandinavian Antiquities (the Viking Club), there is some organization whose members have made the topic the bright star of their firmament.

If we cannot here describe even the more important

ones, we cannot pass them into our bag with merely this very generalized comment. Let me try and group a few of them, in order to emphasize the fact that they contain some most valuable specialized material, to which the courtesy of the society will almost invariably give us access in our necessity. The libraries exist primarily, of course, for the benefit and use of their own members; but in most cases, if not in all, a student can obtain entry to them, through the introduction of a member or by some similar means. It should also be remembered that the books are generally in the care of a specialist in the particular subject, so that we get contact not only with a library, but also with a librarian full of specialized knowledge.

An excellent example of how a relatively wide though specialized sphere is covered by one library is given by the Royal Colonial Institute. There the large library deals with the history, government, trade, resources, and general economics of the Dominions and Colonies. The book-stock is supplemented by an enormous number of periodicals and newspapers, and files of past numbers are maintained. Post-graduate students of any university are allowed to read there, and with proper recommendation many others can do the same. In this case once more, an excellent library is administered by a keen librarian, not only willing but anxious to add his personal knowledge and assistance to the material provided.

From this library we could pass through a long list of carefully built up and exhaustive collections dealing with topics more and more specialized. There is the group of learned societies represented by the Royal Geographical, the Royal Statistical, the Royal Historical, the Royal Astronomical, and the Royal Horticultural Societies. Or there is the group of technical libraries

vested in the Institute of Civil Engineers, of Mechanical Engineers, of Electrical Engineers, and the Royal Sanitary Institute. From these we are led on to a large group of professional libraries like those of the Royal Institute of British Architects, the Chemical Society, the Pharmaceutical Society, like the law libraries of the several Inns of Court, or like the medical libraries of the Royal College of Physicians, the Royal College of Surgeons, and the British Medical Association.

We have now traced a path from the wider spheres to those of a very circumscribed and very specialized scope, but there are still many libraries outside this rough grouping. There is the National Library for the Blind, for which we all have a tender spot in our affections. Loving books and living on books we cannot but appreciate the effective and efficient work of this library as it carries out its plan of providing books for those who do not read with eyes—and will provide free of cost to the individual rather than let any charges impede the contact of the would-be reader and the book. There is the library of the British and Foreign Bible Society with its wonderful collection (and equally wonderful catalogue) of Bibles in all tongues, a help in “language” as well as in other directions. Or there are libraries like those of the larger clubs—“the West End Clubs” as the newspapers term them: the library of the Athenæum, representing its *clientèle*, dignified and learned, bearing for all time the impress of Mr. Tedder; the library of the Reform Club—an almost equally dignified and “select” institution—containing many books of historical and topographical character; there is the library of the National Liberal Club, aiming at providing a “utility” library for the active politician. These libraries are officially “for members only,” but those who ask receive help. As an illustration of what I

mean I may tell you that one of the functions assumed by the National Liberal Club Library is that of providing an "Inquiry Service" on all questions concerning political economics—the phrase can be accredited with a wider import than either politics or economics. But in carrying out this work a careful scrutiny of the membership roll is never deemed an essential preliminary to the answering of the inquiries. (I hope you will agree that I have kept my trumpet carefully hidden until now, and will therefore forgive me this one short and not too shrill blast. It is the perquisite of most librarians.)

And now I am nearly at the end. I say that designedly so that I may retain your patience for yet another moment or two, for I must make mention of the dozens of highly specialized trade libraries which are scattered over London. These are perhaps not libraries in the narrower (and unwise) interpretation of the word. They rely predominantly upon what we call fugitive material, and in fact must do so on account of their particular work, where up-to-dateness is a primary essential; because, as we know, periodical literature is, on the average, some three or four years in advance of the printed book. But they back up this more ephemeral matter by standard reference books and textbooks on their own topics. The Directory of Special Libraries will bring them all into a wider publicity, but we already know that there are libraries dealing industrially with boots and shoes, silk, sugar, glass, music industries, photograph research, and many other trades, with the excellent library and information bureau of the Federation of British Industries as a kind of headpiece.

Space as well as, I hope, discretion must bring to an end this sketchy outline of the mass of material in such London libraries as are not covered by other chapters

in this book. My aim has been to picture the immensity of this mass (without figures, weights, and areas), to give an impression of its detail, to show how freely much of it can be approached through doors already open, and how practically all of the remainder is behind doors that will open (some distance at any rate) to our courteous knock. From a workaday utility point of view do not forget that all this can be further supplemented by organizations which will keep us in contact with the printed records of the moment. Our newspapers themselves maintain libraries, indexes, and inquiry departments. So far as their busy lives will allow, the officials responsible will let us benefit by their work. *The Times* makes it public through its published "Index," and through the concession to subscribers of using the index material even before it reaches its printed stage. And so, while through the established libraries of which we have talked we can reach back to records of past work in all sections of knowledge, through our newspaper indexes, printed and unprinted, we in London can carry our unbroken chain of information down even to yesterday.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Since the first edition of this book the Library of the League of Nations Union, 15 Grosvenor Crescent, S.W.1, and that of the Royal Institute of International Affairs, have shown themselves well worth adding to the list of those mentioned above.



# XI

## LIBRARY RESOURCES OUTSIDE LONDON

BY W. C. BERWICK SAYERS

*Chief Librarian, Croydon Public Libraries*



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LONDON is the centre of the English-speaking book world, as it is the centre of the money market. At the same time, it is perhaps not sufficiently recognized that the provincial student of to-day is in a far better position than he was even a few years ago; and it may be said that such a student may obtain almost any book which is generally available. Basic records, original documents, and other "stuff of which history is made," must always be confined to metropolitan places, but to the average book the means of access in all parts of the British Isles are now various. Of course, the student in cities with great populations, such as Glasgow, Birmingham, Manchester, and Dublin, has great advantage over the isolated student; in fact, is in a position very little inferior, if at all, to the Londoner.

Moreover, it should be remembered that four of the libraries which may receive copies of all books published under the Copyright Acts—the Bodleian Library at Oxford, the University Library at Cambridge, the Advocates' Library at Edinburgh, and the Library of Trinity College, Dublin—are all out of London, and for some works these are even more useful than, or at least supplement, the stores of London.

In this chapter we are concerned with the field as a

whole, and this can be regarded usefully from the following view-points :

- (1) The town student.
- (2) The village student.
- (3) The isolated student.

The needs of these are met in varying degrees by

(a) University libraries (which have been the subject of a previous chapter, and will not be dealt with further here).

(b) State libraries.

(c) Municipal libraries.

(d) Rural libraries administered by county councils.

(e) The Central Library for Students,<sup>1</sup> with its centres for England in London, for Scotland in Dunfermline, and for Ireland in Dublin.

(f) Endowed libraries, more or less free, such as Dr. Williams's Library, Gordon Square, London, which sends out books on religious and cognate subjects to country students.

(g) Semi-public or private institutional libraries supported by subscribers, the greatest of which is the London Library in St. James's Square ; and commercial circulating libraries such as Boots's, Mudie's, Day's and others.

(h) Adult education agencies, such as the University Extension delegacies, which send out boxes of selected books to their organized classes.

(i) Libraries for special purposes, the principal one of which is the National Library for the Blind, which circulates books in Braille and Moon type from its centres at Tufton Street, Westminster, and Deansgate, Manchester.

We shall endeavour in the briefest possible manner to show how these libraries are made to serve a very large part of our population.

<sup>1</sup> Now the National Central Library.

*State Libraries*

Each of the three countries possesses a state endowed and maintained library. The oldest is the one which most recently has been turned into a national library. This is the venerable library at Edinburgh, known for centuries as the Advocates' Library, which by the gift of the Faculty of Advocates, facilitated by a substantial endowment from Sir Alexander Grant, became the National Library of Scotland in 1922. Established in 1682, originally as a law library, it has gradually grown into its now general and comprehensive character. It has many rich special collections, notably on old Spanish books, the history and antiquities of the Northern nations, on the Reformation and so on; but naturally Scottish subjects, including incunabula, early printing, civil and ecclesiastical history, poetry, etc., bulk largely. Classics are also strongly represented. Altogether there are at present about 750,000 volumes and pamphlets, and 3,300 manuscripts. It has enlarged its tradition of admitting any serious student, and what had been a matter of liberal courtesy on the part of the Faculty of Advocates has now become a public right.<sup>1</sup> The Advocates' Library received books under the Copy Tax from 1709, and these rights have been continued to the newer National Library.

Wales established its National Library at Aberystwyth as recently as 1907. This library contains the finest Welsh collections that exist, although it should be pointed out that there are fine collections of books on and in the Welsh language in Cardiff and Swansea Public Libraries. The Welsh national library, again, is general in character, and is open freely to all serious students. It is active in many directions, and has

<sup>1</sup> The rules are now practically identical with those of the British Museum.

means whereby it supplies books to isolated students in the Principality. The total stock of the library consists of 400,000 books, 50,000 deeds and other documents, 5,000 manuscripts, and a large collection of maps, prints, and drawings which are mostly topographical.

The National Library of Ireland, which is situated in Kildare Street, Dublin, was originally the state-maintained library of the Royal Dublin Society. It became the National Library in 1890. Unlike the two libraries just described, it does not receive books under the Copyright Acts, that privilege having been granted earlier to the library of Trinity College, Dublin; and its funds for the purchase of books are small when the character of the library is considered. It contains about 350,000 volumes, and is accessible to the general public.

### *Municipal Libraries*

Next in order of size and importance to the state libraries are those provided and maintained by the municipalities. Wherever the student may be situated, especially when he is out of the reach of a national library, his first inquiry should be directed to the character and resources of the nearest public library.

These libraries, originally wrongly called "free libraries," exist in every well-organized community to-day, but they naturally vary in character, and in the extent of their resources, in accordance with the funds which the community is able or willing to spend upon them. In the greater cities they consist of a reference library containing sometimes hundreds of thousands of volumes, and a large number of branch lending libraries with reading rooms, children's libraries, and other departments, attached. In the smaller towns they consist in the main of a lending library and reading room, with a small reference department, lecture room, and,

sometimes, a children's library. The larger libraries cater for the needs of every type of student, including research workers, and are adequate for this purpose, except when unique original documents are required. The smaller libraries endeavour to present a systematic and balanced selection of the literature of all subjects.

The opinion still prevails in some quarters that the public library is a large distributor of inferior fiction. For many years past this opinion has been false, and the public library should be regarded as a valuable source of books, which should be used before other sources are approached. It should be remembered, too, that the quality of a public library depends upon the demands of its users, as, being publicly controlled, its owners can insist that a certain standard is maintained in its stock and service.

Many public libraries specialize in definite subjects. Nearly all collect the documents, books, pamphlets, and sometimes the prints, relating to the town or country they serve. Some specialize in the dominant industry of the district, as in the case of the special collections on mining at Aberdare, Atherton, and Wigan; on textiles at Blackburn, Bolton, and Bradford; electrics at Chelmsford; and fish and fisheries at Grimsby.

The rules governing the use of public libraries are simple. All departments, except the lending library, are open freely to all comers, usually for about eleven or twelve hours daily. The lending libraries are free only to residents, except that in many cases non-residents are admitted on the payment of yearly subscriptions ranging from half a crown to about half a guinea.

### *Endowed Public Libraries*

The student in the towns is sometimes near enough to a great library which, although not state supported

or municipal, is practically in character a public library. Manchester is the proud possessor of two libraries of this type: the venerable and beautiful Chetham's Library, and the comparatively recent and noble John Rylands Library. Chetham's Library dates from 1653, contains 100,000 volumes and pamphlets, is particularly strong in tracts on the Romanist Controversy under James II, in older theology and local manuscripts, and also possesses the John Byrom Shortland Collection.

The John Rylands Library is one of the great libraries of the world. Like Chetham's, it was founded by private munificence, and is endowed to the extent of £15,000 per annum. The library building itself is a Gothic edifice of singular beauty. The stock consists of rare works, incunabula, manuscripts, and "source" books generally, the balance of subjects being in the direction of the humanities and not science. It incorporates the most famous of all private collections, the Althorp Library, which was formerly the property of Earl Spencer, an unsurpassed collection for the illustration of the development of the book. Altogether the library is a place of pilgrimage for lovers of rare books, and is at the same time "an excellent working library for students, whether in the department of theology, history, philosophy, philology, belles-lettres, art, or bibliography." The management is most enlightened, and readers' tickets can be obtained on application to the librarian. The library ranks with the great national and university libraries.

### *County, or Rural, Libraries*

The most recent development of the public library system has been its extension in a modified form to rural areas. For many years private individuals had arranged circulating libraries for villagers, the best known



being the Coates Libraries in Scotland, the Cheshire Institutes, and the Yorkshire Village Library. In 1915, at the request of the Carnegie United Kingdom Trust, Professor W. G. S. Adams compiled a "Report on Library Provision and Policy." In this was advocated a series of libraries to be controlled by the county councils. As a result the trustees made the offer of approximately £2,000<sup>1</sup> to every county council in England that would undertake to establish and maintain a library repository, and from it to circulate books by means of "travelling libraries" to the villages. The system has met with considerable success, and now almost every county in the British Isles has, under the county education committee, a central book store and a large number of village centres. There is in each a rural librarian, whose business it is to select, catalogue and send out the books, to see that they are changed at frequent intervals, to meet demands for special books as far as possible from the central stock, and to make frequent visits to the various village centres. These centres are village institutes and similar public places, but are mostly in the county council's own elementary schools. In most cases, too, the village librarians do their work voluntarily. In some counties reading rooms have been established here and there, and the tendency is towards a measure of co-operation between existing public libraries in small towns and the county centre.

The county library endeavours to link up with all adult education agencies, to promote concerts of good music, and travelling cinema and theatrical performances. There is a prospect of a considerable future for these rural libraries, especially when they are more generously financed and better staffed.

<sup>1</sup> Early, and some subsequent, grants were larger, according to the size and needs of individual counties.

At the back of the rural libraries as administered by the county, and supplementing the municipal public libraries, are the Central Libraries for Students. The first of these, the National Central Library, was initiated by Dr. Albert Mansbridge, in London, and is supported partly by Government grant, by voluntary subscriptions, by small annual grants from public libraries, and by the generosity, again, of the Carnegie Trustees. This library has headquarters now at 9, Galen Place, Bury Street, London, W.C.1, and has an ever-growing stock of books which are unique in that every one of them has been actually called for by a student. This fact arises from the purpose of the library, which is to supply books, without charge, to students in isolated areas, or to provide books in very infrequent demand for public libraries or other institutions which would not find it to their account to purchase them for the single reader who required them. Such books, the rules require, must cost more than six shillings each ; that is to say, must be out of the reach of the purse of the average student, who, as a rule, has not much of this world's goods.<sup>1</sup>

A special feature of the library is the provision of a large number of duplicates for class use.

As stated above, the use of the library is free, but where the student lives in a public library area he is expected to apply first to his local public library for any book that he needs. When this source fails him the librarian furnishes him with a statement to that effect, which is an introduction to the National Central Library. Books are usually lent for one month, but longer periods are arranged when desirable, and the student is expected to defray postage.

<sup>1</sup> A number of general and special libraries, public and private, act as "Outlier Libraries," and lend their books when required through the N.C.S. Its resources are thus immensely greater than its own stock.

Recently a similar Central Library has been established to serve Scotland at Dunfermline (Abbot Street), and another to serve Ireland in Dublin (32, Merrion Square).

The value of the work done by the Central Libraries for Students is incalculable. They have made it possible for us to say that there is no student in the British Isles, however remotely situated, who cannot get his book, provided he is vouched for by a clergyman or some other public man, and that he can afford the necessary few pence for postage. This, to us, is the main present significance of these libraries, but in them there are possibilities far greater; that is, they may become reservoir collections from which all other libraries may draw such books as it would be uneconomic for them to buy individually. Thus the libraries may grow in time to be the common possession of the whole people, and to be comparable in their effect as lending libraries with the British Museum, and, like libraries, in *their* effect as reference libraries. That such a comparison is grotesque at the moment does not invalidate it; but some time must pass before their money resources will enable them to reach the necessary proportions. Meanwhile they have become indispensable.

### *Libraries for Class Purposes*

A general word may be said about the libraries for class purposes which are usually lent from University Extension centres. The delegacies at Oxford, Cambridge, London, and elsewhere, which furnish panels of lecturers for University Extension courses, are usually willing to send boxes of books on the subjects of the courses to the local centres. The conditions on which these are lent are simple, and can be obtained on inquiry from

the Extension Secretary at each University which promotes these lectures.

### *Special Libraries*

The needs of special classes of readers are in some measure met by libraries which are endowed or supported by public generosity. These should be carefully remembered when we are considering the extra-London student's resources. Students of theology are probably the best catered for, as one might expect from the fact that ministers of religion more frequently need books in isolated centres than other people. Such libraries are the Bede Library of Christian Faith, Abbey House, Victoria Street, which has a small stock of 4,000 volumes which it lends freely; the Library of Church House, Dean's Yard, Westminster, which limits the circulation of its 34,000 books and pamphlets, however, to those who become members; the Congregational Library at Memorial Hall, Farringdon Street, which has 13,500 volumes and a large collection of pamphlets; the English Church Union Theological Library, 31, Russell Square, W.C.1, which lends, from a stock numbering over 10,000 volumes, on very simple conditions; the Friends' Reference Library, 36, Bishopsgate, E.C.2, which has 52,000 books and manuscripts, and confines its free lending to members of the Society of Friends; and, the greatest of all, Dr. Williams's Library.

Dr. Williams's Library is in Gordon Square, W.C.1, and dates from 1716. It has a stock of 80,000 volumes, to which there is a printed catalogue. It is specially strong on Puritan theology, tracts and pamphlets; but on all branches of theology, history and cognate subjects it is well equipped. Books are lent freely to persons in all parts of the country who obtain permission from the librarian.

Libraries of this type dealing with other subjects are few, but a full account of them and their conditions can be found in Rye's *Libraries of London*, 1927, and under the heading "London" in the *Libraries, Museums, and Art Galleries Year Book*, 1923-24,<sup>1</sup> and in *The Librarian's Guide*, 1929-30.<sup>2</sup>

### *Libraries for the Blind*

Of libraries of a special class none is farther-reaching in its work than the National Library for the Blind, which has headquarters at 35, Great Smith Street, Westminster, and a northern branch at John Street, Deansgate, Manchester. The library at Westminster consists of 140,000 volumes and pamphlets, and 12,000 pieces of music, in Braille and in Moon types; the northern branch has 32,000 volumes and also has a collection of music. Both are free to the blind public everywhere, and it may be noted that the postage of a large volume for the blind is only one penny. These libraries issue by post weekly thousands of volumes in all departments of literature for sightless readers. The rules are similar to those in the ordinary municipal public library. The institution derives its support from public subscriptions, grants from public libraries, and, still more liberally, from the Carnegie United Kingdom Trust, and grows continually.

### *Subscription and Commercial Lending Libraries*

So far we have directed our attention mainly to library resources that are open freely or at small cost to the reader in the provinces. For the serious worker who can afford to pay the subscription, there is no better investment than membership of the London

<sup>1</sup> Gravesend, Alex. J. Phillip, 1923.

<sup>2</sup> Liverpool, Literary Year Book Press, 1929.

Library, St. James's Square, London, S.W.1. It will possibly be remembered that this great subscription lending library was established at the instance of Thomas Carlyle in 1841. It is strong in all subjects of a general character which are likely to be required by the literary worker and student, and includes many books that are practically unobtainable elsewhere. Altogether there are now nearly 400,000 volumes available, the keys to which are most admirable author catalogues, and an unsurpassed subject index. The librarian is an eminent scholar, and the staff is of high order. For his subscription of three guineas per annum the subscriber is allowed ten books at a time, and is allowed to retain them considerably longer than is usual in ordinary lending libraries.<sup>1</sup> It is clear, therefore, that for many intellectual workers the London Library is the greatest boon that this country possesses. Incidentally, and as a matter of mere gratitude, we should remark that the catalogues and subject index are sources of reference to good books to which one turns again and again, nearly always with fruitful results.<sup>2</sup>

This is not the place, perhaps, to enlarge upon libraries of the commercial circulating type, but their enormous range should not be overlooked. Such libraries as Mudie's, Boots's, Day's and *The Times'* Book Club, to mention those which are perhaps best-known, supply the bulk of the middle classes everywhere with their current reading. Such libraries have graded subscriptions, guarantee new books and give graded privileges, and they do something to relieve the municipal library from the necessity of providing an overwhelming number of untried books hot from the press. They contain a small proportion of older books, but their main activities

<sup>1</sup> Entrance fee, £4 4s. Country members are allowed fifteen books at a time.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 19.

are limited to new books in the more popular branches of literature, as fiction, memoirs, travel, and the intellectual fashions of the day. Nearly every town of any size has small commercial libraries, or institutes which are in connexion with one or other of these commercial libraries and receive from them a supply of books which is changed at intervals.

### *Cathedral Libraries*

Any discussion of library resources outside of London must have some reference to the ecclesiastical libraries, which are usually situated in the cathedrals. Most of these are mediæval foundations and have what may be called a museum value; and in addition to old theology, philosophy and history, they often contain rare codices, charters, manuscripts, and deeds. Amongst them will be found examples of "chained" libraries, as at Hereford, and also (to mention a church below cathedral rank) at Wimborne Minster in Dorsetshire. One may mention as being worthy of examination by students the libraries of the cathedrals at Bangor; Bristol (the old library, however, was destroyed in 1831 by a mob); Canterbury (10,000 volumes and manuscripts); the Chapter Library, Carlisle (4,000 volumes); Chester; Chichester; Archbishop Marsh's Library, Dublin; Exeter (8,000 volumes); Gloucester (1,800 volumes); Hereford (2,000 volumes); Lincoln (7,000 volumes); Lichfield (7,100 volumes); Norwich (7,000 volumes); Peterborough (3,000 volumes); Ripon (6,000 volumes); St. Asaph (3,000 volumes); Salisbury (7,000 volumes); Winchester (4,000 volumes); and Worcester (5,000 volumes).

### *Conclusion*

The foregoing pages have given a general, but by no means complete, view of extra-London library

resources. Libraries have been beloved by men and women who have been able to promote them, and in many towns a library exists, either in connexion with the public library or as a separate foundation, which reflects the generosity of some book-loving resident. While the Bodleian Library at Oxford and the John Rylands Library at Manchester are cardinal examples of this form of public benefaction, many other towns possess libraries which are of great value to the student, but which, because they are so many and so difficult to define, have not been enlarged upon here. The student may well be advised to make very complete inquiries in any town in which he may be living as to its literary possessions. Many so-called private libraries, or libraries of churches, commercial houses, factories, and so on, are often thrown open with very little difficulty to the real inquirer. This fact rests upon the very amiable human trait that the book lover is the friend of all other book lovers—speaking generally.

Our endeavours have been to describe here what is likely to be most useful to the isolated reader, and not much attention has been paid to the enormous resources, both in general and special libraries, of such cities as Birmingham, Bristol, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Leeds, Liverpool, Manchester, and Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Many of them have special libraries in addition to their university, institutional, and public libraries, which serve students in special arts, crafts, and other branches of intellectual endeavour. To have enumerated them all would have required not a chapter but a volume. In brief index-form the scope and resources of most, if not all of these, are set out handily in the two library year-books, to which we have already referred on page 249. This book proves to any reflective inquirer that while the library resources of the country



as a whole are not yet sufficiently linked up and organized, they are becoming more and more so, and the time does not appear to be far distant when the student in the remotest Hebrides will be little worse off in his access to books than the student actually living in the heart of a great city.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Something might have been said about the great private libraries, at Haigh Hall, Chatsworth, Arundel, Abbotsford, etc.; but this is a difficult subject and the material hard to come at.



## XII

# LIBRARY RESOURCES OUTSIDE BRITAIN

BY ERNEST C. RICHARDSON

*Emeritus Professor and Director, the Library, Princeton, New Jersey, and  
Consultant in Bibliography and Research to the Librarian of Congress*



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THE general subject of this work being the use of libraries, the full title of this chapter is precisely, "The Use of Library Resources Outside Britain." It naturally invites some consideration of the amount and distribution of these resources, the objects of their use and the methods of using. There are two practical objects for which the British library student or librarian will wish to know about foreign libraries and how to use them, first for his own professional education in general librarianship, and second in order to aid the research student in a home library to find abroad the books which he cannot find at home.

The ability to aid research workers is the main point. The increasing number of research students and the more exacting demands of modern research methods is producing everywhere a corresponding demand for books which the home library cannot supply. The search for these by inexperienced workers is often long and painful, but the way can be shortened by bibliographical means, and one of the outstanding facts of modern librarianship is the acceptance by librarians of the duty of guiding such clients to books in other libraries. It is a fact that a librarian may save his client weeks or even months

of time and much expense by borrowing, copying, or even by the simple locating of his material, which makes the acceptance by libraries of this task one of the great steps in modern library progress. It is now well understood that a librarian's duty does not stop with the keeping of books, or even with the service to readers of the books kept. His duty is to connect the serious reader with the books that he needs to use, whether his own library has them or not. The idea is that if the local library cannot fulfil its duty of furnishing a book wanted, the least that its librarian can do is to connect his client with a copy elsewhere.

This special work of the modern reference libraries calls for unlimited knowledge of foreign libraries and the method of their use. The main object here is to suggest what the foreign resources are and how a reader may find and use his material in them.

### *Use for Professional Education*

Before taking up the main theme, however, a word is needed for students of librarianship on the use of foreign libraries for their own general professional education.

The value for this purpose is rather obvious. Librarianship is the art of connecting a reader and a book, surely and promptly. The study of this art is a study of the methods which have been tried—those which fail and those which work—methods of choosing, getting, preserving, preparing, and serving. To study those methods one must study the libraries where they are in operation. Something can be learned about them from printed sources, but to really study one must visit the libraries where they are at work. These are the clinics, the laboratories of library science. For ordinary practice the visit to home libraries is no doubt best; but if a

man stops with home libraries he misses his chance of observing something that will improve home library practice, and especially he misses the best training for the helping of research users who must use the foreign libraries.

This fact is now getting the attention which it deserves. It has become customary in library schools to organize class visits to other libraries, and this school has gained a real distinction by including in its curriculum methods the class visiting of such foreign libraries as those of Brussels and Paris. This practice of visiting other libraries is so obviously profitable to the library<sup>1</sup> served by the touring librarian that authorities sometimes give special vacations and perhaps financial aid to those librarians who are keen enough on this to make the effort. This is on the ground that they bring back service results enough to justify this course. The practice is certainly fruitful enough to a librarian for his own professional progress in ideas to make worth while a good deal of personal self-denial in economizing for this purpose—and the salaries of librarians to-day are such as to make economies pretty rigid if much travel is to be done.

This leads to the further observation, that the best method for the touring librarian to ensure profiting by these visits to other libraries is to himself select beforehand for research work one or more themes which require the actual use of these libraries. To begin with there is no way of studying methods and materials in other libraries for practical suggestion so effective as the use of these libraries for actual study. One never knows how effective a library method is until one has tested it by real use. This, again, leads to the obvious fact that this actual use of other libraries for research work is the best possible method of preparation for the

main reference task of helping research workers. The librarian who has himself gone through the difficult processes of chasing elusive books and documentary material knows how to help as no one who has not himself practised such researches can. Further than this, his own practice in the methods of research gives him a sympathy with the difficulties of the research worker and an understanding of his needs which nothing else can possibly give. Every research librarian must therefore be a practical research worker, or fall short of his best service. The usefulness of this method of actual research in keeping the librarian alive and posted on the problems of the research student is so considerable and obvious that library authorities of research libraries can well afford to encourage frequent and considerable research tours, especially if these are organized with some reference to the matter of study of general methods and possibly purchase of books also at the same time. One institution at least has said that it considers research as much a part of a librarian's duty as any of his administrative duties.

### *Aiding Research Workers*

Turning now from the problem of education in general librarianship to the direct problem of service to research students who wish to use books which cannot be found in home libraries, it may be noted first that the commonest needs of research students as expressed at the reference librarian's desk are three: all manuscripts of a given work, unpublished documents on some special person, place, or event, and specific printed books or groups of printed material not found at home. There are other shades of need which call for the use of engravings, coins, and other library material; but the ordinary need is either for the archival library or the collections of



codices and printed books. For the codices, the commonest users are the students in classics or theology who wish to establish a critical text. For the archives they are the students of history, and for the printed books they are research students of all kinds, but especially perhaps those in history, languages, and economics.

The typical use for codices is text criticism—the formation of a more correct edition of some classical, ecclesiastical, or historical text. Up to the time of Tregelles, say 1868, the search was typically for the best manuscripts of the work, and the oldest were regarded as best. Some of the valuable manuscript-scouting of the Vienna Academy for its Corpus was based on the idea that manuscripts from before the tenth century were the only useful ones. Nowadays, with the coming of the genetic method, and the forming of Stemmata, it is found that a late may be as good as, or even better than, an early one. There are, e.g., two manuscripts of a certain work in Paris, one of the seventh century and the other of the fourteenth century. They are the only members of one main group in a series of 118 manuscripts. The latter was, however, not copied from the former, but both from a common source, so that they are of nearly equal value, and one as often right as the other. In another case, with about ninety manuscripts involved, one group contains a palimpsest of the seventh century, and a half-dozen other manuscripts all of the fifteenth century. The late MSS. obviously could not have been copied from the earlier MS., for this had been defaced several hundred years before. They had, therefore, *prima facie* parallel values. The demand is thus now for all the manuscripts of a work to be edited: one can never tell until each has been placed in its genealogical relations what its value may prove to be.

The typical use for archival collections is the historical study of some local event or some circumstance in the life of some individual or state. This calls for all documents on the given place at the given time as to the given person. It is essentially local and individual.

The typical uses for the printed book are first and commonest some copy of a specific book whose existence is known from bibliographical sources but which cannot be found in local libraries, and second for a group of books on some special subject. This second use is analogous to the use of archives, and in the case of biographies or local events, e.g. a battle, nearly parallel. Take, again, the literature on the birthplace of Columbus—a prolific subject on which few libraries have so much as one-tenth of the literature or so much as may be picked up on a single buying pilgrimage for two or three pounds.

Every librarian who has research clients is faced by this duty of supplying their need in these matters. If his own library does not have the material, it is his duty to purchase, or at least to locate a copy which may be borrowed, copied, or at worst visited.

### *Purchase*

The simplest and most satisfactory solution is of course purchase, but one does not always have the funds, nor can one always buy if one has the funds. It is a very common illusion among American professors that books can be bought when they are wanted, and within, say, six weeks. They tend to hold the librarian personally responsible if they are not produced. The librarian does this often enough to maintain the illusion, and it works for the best-known and most used books. When we come to specialized and research work, however, it fails in a large number of cases, and it is precisely these

failures which compel the use of foreign libraries. It often happens, therefore, that a research student goes abroad with a very long list of books which cannot be found at home and cannot be bought. Cases could be given where a book of nominal monetary value has cost weeks of time and many pounds in travel expense simply to locate a copy. I think of one of which no copy could be found in any American library after repeated and expensive search. At last four copies were found in mildewed condition in an Italian cellar bookshop in a very small town, and bought—the four for one shilling and sixpence. They are still the only copies in America, and no copy of any of three companion works sought for during nearly twenty years has been seen in the trade in the meantime. In another case forty years' search produced no copy.

It is such cases as this, and they occur by thousands, that illustrate the futility of relying on buying and the frequency of the need for resorting to the location of copies in other libraries for borrowing, copying, or visiting.

### *Locating Material in Other Libraries*

When stock and purchase fail the search for material elsewhere begins. It starts of course with the home libraries. Britain's wealth in books and manuscripts is immense, and if a librarian does not have the books wanted he first tries the home libraries as nearest and easiest. Previous chapters have shown the wealth of your public library, university, and record office collections. No nation is sufficient to itself, however, in the matter of book collections, and when national resources end we go abroad.

It is hard to realize how great this international dependence in book matters is, except in the case of

manuscripts and written documents. Unique documents obviously can be found in one place only. If abroad, they must be sought abroad. All research students of the history of any country or literature outside Britain are obviously dependent chiefly on archives and manuscript collections outside Britain.

The extent of the problem of the printed book is, however, not so easily realized. Everyone knows that there are rare printed books and even unique printed books; but most books are published in many copies, and it is hard to realize that one cannot find nearly all books simply by going to the British Museum or the Paris National Library. Panizzi tried to make it so. Americans used to think it was so. Many Americans are still under the delusion that all that they have to do to find their books is to visit one of these libraries. No doubt many British users are under the same impression, for every now and then a book dealer advertises a book, or even produces a catalogue of books, "Not in the British Museum," as if there were not ten million such books in the world.

A recently compiled union list of the British Museum, the Bibliothèque Nationale, the Library of Congress, and some twenty other large libraries, for a very small section of the alphabet (aa to aba) contains 1,357 titles, with bibliographical lists of some 300 titles not in any of the twenty libraries. Of these 1,600 odd titles, the British Museum and the Bodleian together have perhaps one-third of the number, but if the remainder are wanted they must be sought elsewhere. Still more striking is the fact that only 197 out of the 1,600 titles are found in more than one library. The very best equipped libraries in the world must therefore seek in other libraries a large majority of the books which may any day be called for. The fact seems to be that not

even the largest libraries have one-fourth of the world's books.

Of course this does not mean that the best libraries do not supply a larger fraction of the common demands. They are selected to supply the most frequent demands. The British Museum contains a very large fraction of the books' oftenest asked for by the average intellectual worker. It may supply 90 per cent. of the books for which its catalogues are actually consulted in the Reading Room, although it contains only 20 per cent. of the books which are occasionally needed, and thus disappoints readers in tens of thousands of cases annually.

More significant even than the present extent of the lack is the fact that even the biggest libraries are not only not gaining on the problem, but are falling rapidly behind. This is a prime fact of the situation. There is no library in Britain which annually adds so much as one-fourth of the books published annually outside of Britain. Probably there is not one which adds so much as one-tenth.

A recent study of books printed in the United States of America annually, and probably kept in some library or libraries, suggests an annual increase of 135,000 volumes and pamphlets for America only, with a world output of not far from half a million, where even the Library of Congress adds only 90,000 volumes in a year, and a large fraction of these are foreign. The current figures of book production which go the annual rounds of the press refer only to books in the trade, and are thoroughly misleading—dangerously so for the problem which librarians have to meet of actually housing and cataloguing the books. British research work is therefore definitely dependent on foreign libraries for much of its material, and the worker is entitled to know what the foreign resources are and how to use them for his purposes.

*The Resources Outside Britain*

The main factors are: libraries of printed books, collections of manuscripts and archives. The points of interest are the quantity and distribution of these resources; but first a few words on the sources of information regarding them.

*Sources of Information*

In the matter of unlocking the world's library resources the present generation is lucky. It has two golden keys in the *Index Generalis* and the *Minerva*. It must be confessed that for a bird's-eye view of the world's chief library resources neither these nor any modern list is as good as the *Encyclopædia Britannica* list of 1872 was for its time, and the table of its article on libraries is still worth study. As a skeleton view of the situation no modern source is its equal. The *Minerva* does not even group the libraries together, but scatters them through the various institutions of a city and arranges the places alphabetically. It, moreover, gives few details beyond name and number of volumes. But it gives more libraries and is more exact than the *Index*, and is fuller than the older sources.

The *Index* both sorts out the libraries from among the other learned institutions and groups them by countries. It forms thus a more convenient guide-book to the traveller, a better means for visualizing the field, and a more easily used basis for comparative statistics. It contains, moreover, more practical information for the travelling scholar, e.g. the hours of opening and the library specialities. It is a model of practical method in choosing the most useful information. The library section taken from the rest and bound separately, as the bibliographical traveller of the past generation used to

take the Britannica table, forms the best existing and a very admirable traveller's handbook to libraries.

The Index has been criticized for its typographical errors, its many inexplicable omissions, its naturally strong French perspective, and its arbitrary exclusion of all American libraries under twenty thousand volumes, but it is nevertheless a superb practical tool. Its figures for American libraries can be easily cross-checked by the list of the United States Bureau of Education. The last printed edition of this list brings only to 1913, but the manuscript returns for 1923 have been made available for this chapter with the understanding that these are to be regarded as unfinished and provisional.

These three sources, the Minerva, the Index Generalis, and the Bureau of Education list, form a very consistent group of sources. They cross-check one another at necessary points, are all founded on direct answers from the libraries themselves or from official documents, and as statistics go, will form when checked an unusually sound base for a general perspective.

There are many other sources which add something to the information of these three sources for the travelling scholar. Among these are the local city directories, and annuals of various kinds, especially statistical and educational annuals. For travellers' use, the local directories are sometimes of the first value, giving as they often do information as to hours of opening, more detail about the libraries, and often showing additional libraries. For the student of library history there are many others, more or less up to date as the case may be, but valuable for older figures at least. These include censuses, educational reports, library and bibliographical annuals, lists such as those of Clegg and the American Library Annual, articles in encyclopædias, etc. Most of these second-line sources are mentioned in the reference

books given in the first chapter. For present purposes of perspective, however, and for ordinary use it is better to forget these and to concentrate attention on the three main sources mentioned above.

For accurate statistical work all sources are needed, and will be found at best too scanty and too unstandardized for satisfactory work ; but for a simple perspective sketch the *Index Generalis* does well enough, and its information is so grouped as to allow direct use where the statistics of the *Minerva*, although they include more libraries, cannot be summarized without the labour of regrouping. On the whole it will be better to give the *Index* figures straight with certain cautions and explanations than to try to doctor its figures out of other sources.

It is to be remembered in the first place that the libraries of the *Index* and of the *Minerva* alike include the libraries of learning only, and not such popular libraries as contain chiefly or only fiction. This, however, does not quite account for the fact that it omits all American libraries under 20,000 volumes, and a good many over, including a hundred or so over 50,000 volumes, while at the same time one-third of the French libraries given are under 20,000 volumes. It does not wholly account either for the fact that the *Index* includes only forty-one Latin-American libraries, while the list prepared by the librarian of the Pan-American Union includes several hundreds. The figures for the statistics of European libraries outside of France may be taken as the standard fullness, remembering that the figures of France are a little fuller than these, while the figures for America, Africa, and Asia are a good deal less full and less consistent.

Again, beginners in the study of library statistics should be warned that the satisfactoriness of these and all



library statistics is a good deal affected by the lack of common standards in the use of the terms volumes, titles, works, pamphlets, and manuscripts. The confusion between codices and historical documents, and between volumes and pamphlets, is also serious. Other qualifications and connexions will be given *passim* in reviewing the resources of the various localities.

With these cautions we may proceed with the straight figures of the Index, basing on the figures for 1924, which are on the whole better than those of 1925, but annotating from time to time out of figures drawn from the 1925 Index, the 1925 Minerva, the Bureau of Education list, and other sources.

### *Quantity*

According to the Index for 1924 the world resources of printed books organized in libraries for the use of learning consist in round numbers of 230,000,000 (228,591,000 against 225,212,000 in 1925) books, in 2,600 libraries (2,300 in 1925).

Britain has about 300 libraries and 25,000,000 books, and of these England has 20,000,000. The British Empire has 30,000,000 volumes in 400 libraries. The English-speaking nations had in 1924 110,000,000 in 1,200 libraries—half the world resources. In the 1925 Index, owing to large omissions, the number of English language libraries was reduced to 1,000, and their volumes to 100,000,000. Two hundred and five million books in 2,300 libraries are thus outside Britain, and represent the field of this lecture.

Besides this printed literature there are a million or two volumes of bound manuscripts in the same libraries, and uncounted millions of written documents in 580 archives. While these constitute the larger and more inexorable part of the problem of the research student

it is the printed book which is the more immediate problem of the librarian and affects his library management most. It is also the point at which service is most capable of practical improvement by known bibliothecal methods.

Of the 518 archival libraries mentioned in the 1924 Index, 516 were outside Britain and 2 in Britain. This 2, however, was 2 more than are given for the United States. To comment adequately on the fact that France was given 173 archives and Germany 129, where Britain was given 2 and North America none, would involve a whole essay on the development of archival science and another on the fallacy of names in comparative statistics. It is enough to say here that it does not mean that England and America do not have a great many record collections and written historical documents under names other than Archives or Record Offices. There are, for example, many small towns in Connecticut which have important historical records from the middle of the seventeenth century on, and there is a large collection of photostat copies of such records kept at the State capital. There is one little town at the mouth of the Connecticut River with a few hundred inhabitants whose records touch English history at a dozen points, and include royal grants, agreements with the Indians, with wills and other documents involving Lord Saye and Sele, Colonel Fenwick, and a score of well-known English families of the time, not only in their Connecticut affairs but in their English property and relations. There are hundreds of such local collections in America, and other hundreds or thousands of groups of documents in historical societies and public libraries everywhere, many of which would be kept in archival collections in Europe.

Returning now to the resources in printed books in

the figures of the Index Generalis, it must not be forgotten that these libraries include only the high peaks among the world's library resources for educational purposes. They represent in the main research resources as distinguished from the means of spreading common knowledge. The perspective of this is shown by the fact that while these figures include 805 libraries in the United States, the Bureau of Education register includes some 20,000, and that public libraries in the sense of libraries organized for the use of more than one family have been recently estimated as perhaps 310,000, while the number of private family libraries having 100 to 300 volumes each is perhaps ten times this number. The same thing is of course more or less true of all countries.

To return to the figures themselves. The total as before said was in 1924 : 2,600 libraries and 228,591,000 printed books. Of these 17 (19) had more than 1,000,000 volumes each, 561 (579) more than 100,000 each, and 1,066 more than 50,000 each.

### *Distribution of Printed Books*

It is a striking fact that the great bulk of the world's libraries, and a greater bulk of its books, are located in two narrow areas of Western Europe and Eastern North America. A majority of the world's books lie within 500 miles of London or 500 miles from New York—and for those who love a sea voyage, London and New York are very near neighbours. British research students work at a great advantage in the fact that Europe (outside of Britain) has one-half the world's books, and the closely adjacent France, Belgium, Holland, and Germany contain two-thirds of the books of Europe.

Three, and only three, Continental nations have each more than 100 libraries and more than 10,000,000 volumes—Italy with 185 (145) libraries and 15,000,000

volumes, France with 390 (373) libraries and 27,000,000 volumes, and Germany with 273 (287) libraries and 34,000,000 volumes. France with its 390 libraries and 26,555,000 volumes has 63 (67) libraries over 100,000 and leads all European states in the matter of the largest libraries, having three out of twelve.

It has one library centre, internationally used by more foreign literary workers than any other library on the Continent. The Bibliothèque Nationale is still the largest collection of printed books in the world. It has the largest and perhaps the richest collection of manuscripts, and with its great collection of prints, etc., forms a remarkable whole. The French Archives are, moreover, perhaps the richest in the world for cosmopolitan historical interest. Paris has nearly one hundred other libraries of importance. These contain many large special collections, and contribute to a general mobilization of French resources which make of Paris the most centralized national total of working resources in the world. The resources of Italy, Germany, and America are divided among several working centres, and even London must, in some sort, share honours with Oxford and Cambridge.

Italy has 185 libraries and 14,817,000 (14,712,578) volumes. It is given 50 (52) libraries of over 100,000 volumes and one of a million. It has three working centres of great distinction. Milan, with the big and efficient Brera (Braidense) and the ancient and famous Ambrosiana, rich in manuscript resources, is the centre for Northern Italy, from Venice to Turin and Genoa, and includes many libraries of some size, with several smaller ones, like Verona and Vercelli, of first distinction for their manuscript interest. Florence, with the famous manuscript collections of the Laurentian and the National libraries (both curiously omitted by the

Index), the large and usable book collection of the National, and several minor libraries of considerable distinction, is centrally placed; its resources are very usable, and tempt workers far beyond what the mere quantity of its collections would suggest.

Rome is not only the chief national book centre, but it is a unique world centre for classical and ecclesiastical studies. Its *Bibliotheca Vaticana* stands by itself in international reputation. It is also, perhaps, the richest of the large collections of manuscripts, although not the most extensive, and its excellent reference collection and personal reference service contribute much to its prestige among research workers. The *Nazionale* with its million books is a good working library, and is well supported by the *Alessandria*, the *Angelica*, and many large special libraries, among which the libraries of the Chamber of Deputies and of the Ministry of Agriculture are of special interest to librarians. The libraries of the various national archæological schools, English, German, French, Austrian, American, form a surpassing apparatus for ancient history. As a centre for archival studies Rome has the famous Vatican Archives, and the huge centralized *Archivio di Stato*, with its modernized methods and admirable school of palæography.

Germany is given the largest number of libraries after France, and leads all in the matter of volumes—273 (287) libraries and 33,828,540 volumes. It has two libraries of over a million volumes each, 84 (87) libraries of over 100,000 volumes, and 158 of more than 50,000 volumes. It is the land of large libraries, excelling all other European libraries in each class, except the million class, where Austria and Britain equal and France exceeds. Germany has two first-class library working centres, Berlin for the north and Munich for the south, with several minor centres of some importance.

Berlin has its Preussische Staatsbibliothek, with nearly 2,000,000 volumes, and 53 other libraries and archives of importance, according to the Index. The 1925 Minerva gives 131 libraries and 9 archives. Moreover, Berlin is the railroad centre for a considerable number of cities of first-class importance for their library resources—Leipzig, Dresden, Hanover, etc. The Union Catalogue of Prussian libraries makes this centre unrivalled for many classes of work.

Munich's wonderful manuscript collection in the Staatsbibliothek, with the million and a half printed volumes of the same library, and the admirable University Library with its nearly a million printed volumes, as well as a score or more other good libraries, has always been found a popular working centre.

Other centres of European book population are Holland and Belgium, with nearly 10,000,000 volumes taken together. Brussels is an admirable working centre, with easy access to Paris and Germany and a reasonable cost of living. Austria has still 5,000,000 volumes, and Vienna with 2,000,000-volume libraries was in old days a favourite working place. Switzerland has about 4,000,000 volumes, and Zurich, with good libraries and a union catalogue, is perhaps its best working centre. The Scandinavian countries have nearly 7,000,000 volumes, Poland more than 6,000,000 volumes. Moscow seems now to be the chief Russian library centre, and a rather active one.

Anglo-North-American libraries included, in 1924, 826 libraries with 83,382,000 volumes. The Index figures for 1925 reduce libraries by more than 100 and volumes by more than 10,000,000.

For fifty years now the United States and Canada have been demonstrating the feasibility of international library co-operation on wholly democratic terms, and without

interfering with national distinctiveness whether in social or legislative matters. They have worked together in one Association without distinction as to meeting places or offices. Nearly all the great libraries of the United States and Canada are massed in the north-eastern states and the adjoining Canadian provinces.

The Index gives 20 (24) Canadian libraries with 2,168,000 volumes and 805 (686) American libraries with 81,198,000 (70,317,203) volumes. This is a selection. Recent statistics mention 500 Canadian libraries and 8,479 American libraries having more than 1,000 volumes each.

The United States of America is given by the Index for 1924, 805 libraries with 81,198,000 volumes. Eighty-one had more than 100,000 volumes. In 1925 the number with over 100,000 volumes was 173. Six (8 in 1925) had more than 1,000,000. The Index for 1924 gives 358 libraries which have more than 50,000 volumes each, but the Department of Education statistics for 1923 itemize 427. Three libraries have over 2,000,000 and one over 3,000,000 volumes.

Five working centres may be distinguished: Washington, New York, including the Canadian libraries, Boston, Chicago, and San Francisco. Several subcentres can be distinguished, as Montreal, Philadelphia, Pittsburg, and the region which includes Cleveland, Detroit, and Buffalo.

Washington has, besides the Library of Congress with its upwards of three million volumes, eight other libraries with an average of a quarter of a million volumes each, and many smaller but highly specialized libraries of particular importance. In addition to book collections the Library of Congress has collections of music, prints, and maps amounting to a million and a half items. Moreover, its Union Catalogue and borrowing facilities give

a peculiar value to Washington as a centre for study. The same is true of the exceptional catalogue of its own books. The unique library of the United States Surgeon-General's Office, 8 university and college libraries, 10 law libraries, and some 30 or 40 other libraries on education, international law, and other special subjects are among its resources. Baltimore with its three large libraries is near by.

New York. Of eight libraries in the United States having more than 900,000 volumes in 1923, three are in New York City and four within six hours' ride of New York, the eighth being in Chicago. Half the North American library books are in New York and adjoining states. Three-quarters of the books of the United States are in the states of which New York is the railway centre and within twenty-four hours' journey.

Besides the great public libraries, New York has 10 medical, 18 law, and 3 theological seminary libraries of the first rank, with 6 more in Connecticut and New Jersey close by. Other so-called special libraries include 4 historical, 2 engineering, 2 museum, 2 botanical libraries, the Library of the American Museum of Natural History, 7 college and university libraries, Pratt Institute, and last but not least, except perhaps in size, and first in bibliographical distinction, the Morgan Library. The New York Public Library has important collections of manuscripts and rare books. The same is true of Columbia University Library and others.

Boston long retained the honour of being the best working centre in America by virtue of its Public Library and the Harvard University Library near by. The former has nearly one and a half million volumes, and the latter two and a half. The district contains two other libraries approaching a quarter of a million volumes and half a dozen other libraries of unusual distinction.



Harvard University Library is the leading American University Library, the oldest of the large reference libraries and of unusual value for practical use. Its books, staff, and building are of such a standard for research work as to make this a competitor of the Library of Congress and the New York Public Library for a visiting worker, especially in historical matters. Although pressed at one point or another by Yale, Columbia, Chicago, and other universities, it still maintains an easy general leadership. The region includes 6 law libraries, 6 medical libraries, 11 theological libraries, 8 of these of the first order. Ninety-three other "special libraries" are listed.

Chicago has in its Public Library (1,300,000 volumes) the only library of over a million volumes west of Washington, and it has three other libraries of the first importance and with from one-half to three-quarters of a million volumes each—the John Crerar, the Newberry, and the Chicago University, each perhaps of more research value than the large Public Library. On account of its character as a railway centre, Chicago serves a large area, which includes most of the great state universities of the middle west, and it is served by their libraries in turn. Within its natural radius are 8 of the 23 (1924 Index) libraries of more than half a million volumes each. It has 11 law libraries, 11 theological libraries, 3 medical libraries, and many so-called "special libraries."

San Francisco. The libraries of this city were diminished by earthquake a few years since. It has, however, in its region two first-class university libraries, Stanford and the University of California. The State Library at Sacramento is of the first class, and the public libraries farther south are growing rapidly, as are also the university and public libraries of Oregon and Washington in

the north. The Huntington Library is in a class with the Morgan Library of New York. This and the Hoover War Library already attract special students from all over the country and from abroad.

### *Using the Resources*

The first rule for the use of foreign libraries is the same as the famous first rule for cooking hares—"First catch your hare"; and it must be remembered that there are at least three kinds of bibliographical hares and three ways of catching them. The first step to catching is, however, in every case finding. Codices, written documents, and printed books alike must be located before they can be borrowed, copied, or visited.

Hunting for intellectual food may not be so physically exciting as pot-hunting, but the zests are comparable, and who knows whether the dangers may not be equal? Big-game hunting for libraries is excavating for papyri and tablets, or exploring the out-of-the-way places of civilization for manuscripts and rare books to bring home to the British Museum or the local library. Its dangers are real, and it has its martyrs, like Lord Carnarvon recently in Egypt, and more lately still, Mr. Ananikian scouting for oriental manuscripts in the Near East for two American libraries. This hunting for rare works is, however, apart from our subject; it belongs to the accession department, not to the use department of a library. What we have to deal with here is those tamer species of books which have already been caught and domesticated in libraries.

Nevertheless the locating of books in foreign libraries is interesting work, and often almost as difficult and even as dangerous as the hunting of rare books for purchase. A reasonable amount of it may be recom-

mended to every courageous librarian as a sporting recreation, and as revealing to him the dangers and hardships to readers which may lurk in his own library.

### *Locating*

The duty of a librarian to guide his research clients to material not to be found in his own library or country begins thus with locating the material, and proceeds to borrowing if possible, copying if not possible, and preparing the travelling researcher for his travels if neither purchase, borrowing, nor copying is feasible. The preparation for borrowing or copying or travel is much the same in all three cases, although the first two aim rather at specific books, while travel aims more often to locate groups of material or possible material. For this purpose of locating books and groups of books the librarian gathers printed library guides, individual library catalogues, and union finding lists, and organizes correspondence service for unpublished catalogues, individual or union.

### *General Guides to Libraries*

These include universal guides such as the Index Generalis, the Minerva, etc., which show in what specialities the various libraries deal. The Index is good at this point.

Lesser aids, in the same spirit, are found in the old books of bibliographical travel, in the scouting reports of learned academies for patristic and medical manuscripts, in countless introductions to works which use source material, and in national lists of material in which libraries specialize or are "rich." The American lists in this type were begun by Mr. W. C. Lane and pub-

lished by Harvard. The Lane list was later enlarged by Dr. W. D. Johnston and Miss Mudge, and published by the United States Bureau of Education.

The very elaborate survey of libraries now being conducted under the direction of a Committee of the American Library Association has lately adopted this feature as one of the elements of its questionnaire, and will produce a still more thorough guide to the rapidly increasing special material in American libraries.

### *Library Catalogues*

Guides to the libraries follow guides to the books in them. The primary guides in the preparation of travelling researchers and librarians are the printed catalogues of manuscripts and printed books, and the inventories, summary inventories, and calendars of historical documents. These catalogues are to be distinguished as the catalogues of individual libraries, and the union, joint, or co-operative catalogues which are now taking on very great importance with the vast increase in printed literature.

### *Catalogues of Individual Libraries*

Everybody who practises or promotes research realizes the very great importance for the use of other libraries of the printed catalogues of the British Museum, the Bibliothèque Nationale, the Library of Congress, and other libraries. These catalogues are in constant use for this purpose of locating copies, and they tend to save a good deal of time for travelling and copying purposes; in the case of the Library of Congress the catalogue is also used by the depositing libraries for borrowing purposes.

*The Catalogues of Manuscripts*

These are used by a narrower class, but are very much appreciated by the few, and industriously used. The British Museum resources at this point are considerable, but probably the best and handiest collection in the world is in the Manuscript Room of the Paris Library, where the well-thumbed state of many of the catalogues shows how great the use is.

*Union Catalogues*

The best solution to the problem of locating books not in the local library is the Union Finding List. A distinction is to be made between the Union Finding List and the Union Catalogue. The Union Catalogue contains all copies of each work in a given neighbourhood, and serves as a catalogue for the local libraries. The Union Finding List aims only at locating somewhere one or a few copies of each work not readily found otherwise. The right method of producing these for the best service is now being evolved. It produces Union Catalogues of individual neighbourhoods, like the Union Catalogue of the Zurich Libraries, the proposed Union Catalogue of the Paris Libraries, and the Union Finding List of Periodicals in the Libraries of Rome, Chicago, Boston, Philadelphia, and many other cities. The attempt to combine these local Union Catalogues into national or international catalogues is a huge, expensive, and somewhat cumbersome affair. The Union Catalogue of periodicals in American libraries now under way illustrates the Union Catalogue method and will be an extremely useful tool; but the experience of financing and compiling this is a concrete experience illustrating the expensive and cumbersome

nature of the Union Catalogue, and pointing to the principle of the Union Finding List as the solution. The Brussels Repertory shows the same thing. The Union Catalogue of Incunabula in American libraries, on the other hand, shows the value of the principle of the joint catalogue, and of including all copies in the case of rare books.

The principle of the Union Finding List is to include all copies of out-of-the-way books and a few copies only of the commoner books in each locality. This is best illustrated at the present moment by the Library of Congress Union Catalogue, which contains the printed cards of libraries other than the Library of Congress, and has a large number of titles, from various sources, of unusual books. This is kept weeded more or less of unnecessary copies, but already contains nearly three million cards. The various American Union Card Lists, based on the Library of Congress cards and the published cards of various other libraries, are gathered on the Finding List principle of locating some copy somewhere. The Prussian Union Catalogue (3,000,000 cards) is strictly a joint catalogue of eleven libraries, but the Frankfort Union List is rather a regional finding list.

Historically and typically the best example of the Union Catalogue is a catalogue of manuscripts. All MSS. are in effect unique. This produces demand and early attempts at solution. There are in fact not far from forty such catalogues, large and small. Of these perhaps the most familiar are those of Haenel, Montfaulcon, and Bernard. The limited nature of the field makes a complete Union Catalogue possible. One of the greatest bibliographical needs at the present time is for a new and complete international catalogue of volume manuscripts. It is feasible, easy to make, and would save enormously more in valuable research time than it could

possibly cost. It involves, perhaps, two million manuscripts.

Union Catalogues of printed books or even Finding Lists of printed books are a much more formidable proposition, and are rarely attempted or even projected except for limited fields. The universal bibliography of literature is a larger matter still. This has often been discussed, and such a catalogue was projected, by no means for the first time, at the first meeting of the American Library Association fifty years ago, when it was supposed that the matter involved two or three million volumes only. The ambitious project of the Brussels Institute already includes more than five million titles. This is now to be continued under the patronage of the League of Nations Committee on Intellectual Co-operation, and faces twelve or fifteen million titles as Union Catalogue and eighty million or more as bibliography. It is in reality by method of its compilation a Union Catalogue of the libraries which print their catalogues, and by agreement with the League Committee is to be continued first as a Union Finding List, but with the idea that this Finding List may eventually serve as the best basis for a universal bibliography.

In America the printing of cards by the Library of Congress and the placing of depository sets of these in many of the large research libraries, together with the printing for sale of cards by Harvard, Chicago, and several other university libraries, the John Crerar, and other general libraries, has resulted in a considerable number of large Union Card Finding Lists of great local usefulness. These lists include all the purchasable printed cards and other desultory memoranda. The printed cards of the Boston and New York Public Libraries cannot be purchased in the same way, but copies are in the Library of Congress Union List, and

can, through its information and photostat service, be had at very slight cost.

The method which is being evolved out of all this, and promises to be the best and most inexpensive solution of the real need, is the Union Card List with simple information service, like that of the Library of Congress and the Prussian State Library, for its titles. This may be supplemented by special printed short-title Finding Lists in various classes, and possibly, in the undefined future, a general short-title Finding List of the very rarest titles, with indications of two or three copies each of the lesser titles in each geographical centre. In America the need has been defined as two located copies of every book, one of which is never loaned and can therefore always be found by visiting, the other lendable. If practicable, it is desirable to have the copies of each work in five different localities, each with printed Finding Lists and indication of reserved and lending copies.

### *Correspondence*

In actual practice, owing to the circumstances, first that most libraries do not have printed catalogues of printed books, second that there are few good collections existing of printed catalogues, either of printed volumes or codices, much of the work of locating uncommon books is done by the very expensive methods of correspondence, inquiry, or visiting the local catalogues of the most likely libraries. Only those who have had long experience in this have any conception of the vast amount of valuable research time spent on this which might be saved by the simplest form of a printed Index Finding List or a Union Card Finding List with information service. The simplest joint index to existing printed catalogues of manuscripts would, as M. Seymour de



Ricci has lately been suggesting, go far to solve manuscript finding at minimum cost.

### *Borrowing*

International borrowing to supply the needs of research students is a good deal practised, even, and perhaps especially, in the matter of manuscripts and rare books. Many of these have been borrowed for England from the Continent. The method has, however, its serious drawbacks. There is the risk of loss, and in the case of unique books it is contrary to the principles of best service. It not infrequently happens that a travelling research worker will go some distance and find that the volume he has gone to see is loaned out to another city or country. I recall once going from the Riviera to Paris for a manuscript which proved to have been loaned to a small place in Germany. Moreover, the restrictions are so various that it is difficult to rely on borrowing even between national central libraries, although many workers have found it very convenient to have manuscripts gathered for them at Paris from various libraries in France, or at Munich or Vienna from the libraries of the respective regions.

### *Copying*

The agitation of some years ago in favour of the international lending of books seems to have subsided, and presumably for the reason that the improvement in modern photographic methods makes possible the copying of even good-sized books for a very moderate fee. The Bodleian Library and the British Museum were among the pioneers in this work, and the Vatican brought inexpensive service to a point of great efficiency, even before the photostat and other photo-printing machines were invented. Now many libraries resort to this very

frequently. Some university libraries have the policy of providing the full apparatus needed by a local researcher for his work, so far as this can be done by inexpensive forms of photography. Some attempt is being made in America to form Union Catalogues of such photostat material.

### *Visiting*

When all has been said, however, the commonest solution of the problem is, and always must be, the actual visiting of the local library where the book or group of books is known to exist or may perhaps be found. This use of foreign libraries by visiting is expensive and has its hardships, but has also its great compensations, scientific and humane. It involves many elements which can be well prepared for, but is sure to have surprises even for the best prepared. The main things to be considered beforehand are the conditions of use, times of opening, how to use catalogues, the rules and methods of using them. The limits of this paper forbid more than the briefest suggestions on some of the more obvious matters.

### *Hours of Opening and Holidays*

This is a matter full of surprises. It was an Oxford professor in an Italian city who had run over for a few weeks at the mid-winter holidays who said that he had been there for perhaps twenty-five days, and all but three had been holidays and he couldn't work. Yet an experienced librarian, in the same situation, had found a partly opened library in the same city to which his manuscript could be loaned, and had lost no time. But one must be prepared to run up against an occasional closing of several weeks at a time and a very

large number of holidays. The opening hours are very varied and often include a long break in the middle of the day. This is sometimes mitigated by locking the worker in during the interval. In many cases one may learn beforehand from the Index Generalis or local directories about holidays and hours of opening; but one must be on one's guard against travellers' guide-books, which are apt to give the hours for sightseers, not for workers. And one must be prepared also for changes from the printed information.

### *Conditions of Admission*

These vary from the simple presentation of a card or passport to a form of permission from Government authorities on recommendation of Embassy. There is rarely any difficulty, although difficulties sometimes threaten. In one case, after returning "to-morrow" for three successive days for formal permission to use, as laid down in all the authorities, the reader presented himself with his card at the library itself, and was admitted to all sorts of facilities, with some reproach for not having come direct instead of bothering with the political authorities. The Paris National Library requires a card from one's Ambassador for a regular Reader's Card, but does not let anything stand in the way of immediate use, using a temporary card for this. For librarians, professional comity helps, but is not to be presumed on.

### *Use of Catalogues*

Catalogues are of all sorts, shapes, and sizes. The card catalogue is usual in Spain and universal in America. The hinged slip is preferred in France and Italy and is common in Germany. In smaller libraries, and in many of the large older libraries, the main cata-

logue is in a large volume, ledger form. In actual use the loose-leaf cross between the hinged slip and the volume as practised by the British Museum is probably the most rapid aid to the user ; but this has few imitators, and it is generally accepted to-day that on the whole, and for the authors' catalogue at least, the keeping up to date of the card catalogue offsets its slight decrease in speed of handling. Taking all in all, a majority of local library catalogues do not give all the titles in one series, and one must consult several catalogues. Sometimes it is a rather complex process to exhaust the catalogue material and be sure the desired references have not been overlooked. This is true at Paris in both manuscript and printed book departments. It pays the student to master these intricacies and the varying customs of entry, so far as possible, at the very outset. He saves himself time and disappointment if he does.

### *Rules of Issuing and Use*

Some libraries make a practice of providing detailed rules in places convenient for the reader, and thereby earn his blessings. The Paris Library, among its many recent improvements, now faces the reader as he enters the room with a little stand covered with a plan of the Reading Room and a copy of the printed list of books in the room, which contains also in its preface a very detailed description of the rules for finding and getting books.

The regulations differ greatly in different libraries. Some allow only a limited number of books at a time—two or three or even only one. It is possible sometimes to mitigate the hardships of this by having a considerable number gathered ready at hand and renewing the supply as fast as the books are used. With a limit of three at a time in the Paris Manuscript Room it has been

possible to have a score of manuscripts gathered and passed out as fast as needed. It is sometimes a bit aggravating to attempt to use a library where rules are strictly applied and only one volume at a time allowed, even of encyclopædias and other reference books. Being served over the counter under such rules one makes slow progress.

A very common rule is that no ink may be used with manuscripts and rare books, and this is troublesome to one used to his fountain pen. A common modern rule is that there shall be no tracing, and fingers must not touch the book in reading. This extreme care and prohibition of tracing is not unreasonable in these days of inexpensive photographic copying.

One rather unusual rule which has been met with is that a book shall be collated by the librarian after the reader has finished. This was made after the Libri thefts, and one who has himself found valuable miniatures cut out of manuscripts between two usings can hardly blame a librarian for taking every precaution.

The main rule for using rules is to follow them, however unnecessary they may seem. The user is a guest. The books belong to the library used, and its right to condition use is obvious.

### *The Use of Reference Collections*

The same advice is to be given here as in the use of catalogues ; it pays to learn the apparatus at the very beginning by reading rapidly the titles of the books on the shelves of the Reading Room to see what familiar reference books are at hand for use. For librarians it is well worth while to read all the Reading Room collection titles in detail and with care, and especially the unfamiliar ones. The process becomes rapid when one

knows the size and shape of the familiar books, and there is no more valuable use of time for the travelling librarian than the study of unfamiliar reference books. It is a truism of research work that familiarity with reference aids is the greatest time saver. In many lines of work, early orientation in the aids may double the effective working time.

### *Copying and Collation Service*

Where good typewriting service or photostat service or the service of good collators can be had in the library it may quicken the pace of work a great deal. In many cases where such work cannot be done by the library, the library has an information service as to where such aid can be had at reasonable cost.

### *Access to the Shelves and Special Privileges*

All know how access to shelves multiplies the output per hour of a user on many lines. Librarians sometimes receive special professional favours of this sort, but both as a sporting matter and as a matter of professional consideration, it is well to be modest about this. Many librarians go an extraordinary way in putting themselves out to serve the special need of any serious reader—witness the Vatican Library under Cardinal Ehrle and his successors. It is a good rule for any worker not to ask special privileges of any sort, where it is not a distinctly urgent matter, and not to criticize too much, even to himself, the restrictions and rules which seem to him superfluous and hindering. No doubt there are librarians, both at home and abroad, who take themselves and their precious rules too seriously; but on the other hand the user is a guest, and will not dream of returning discourtesy

for discourtesy. He will be sometimes tempted to forget and return a Roland for an Oliver. If he does he will be punished by remorse—and deserve all that he gets. The student who uses many libraries has one of the greatest of human satisfactions—the feeling that he is under debt to very many persons for their kindness. He will be wise not to mar this satisfaction.





# XIII

## LIGHT LITERATURE IN PUBLIC LIBRARIES

By ERNEST A. BAKER, M.A., D.Lit.



LIGHT LITERATURE IN PUBLIC LIBRARIES<sup>1</sup>

BY ERNEST A. BAKER, M.A., D.LIT.

The quite common opinion that the arts have after all very little effect upon the community shows only that too little attention is being paid to the effects of bad art.—I. A. Richards, *Principles of Literary Criticism*.

IN this chapter I must appear in the inauspicious rôle of a resurrectionist. The question at issue has repeatedly been declared dead, dead and done with. To revive it will harrow the feelings of certain worthy people who dug a grave for it long ago, and even went so far as to bury the alleged corpse and subscribe for an unobtrusive but satisfactory tombstone. For, though the question of light literature in public libraries has been carefully interred for many years, and is almost forgotten, it is my duty to announce that it is not really dead, but very much alive.

Recently I had a letter, marked "not for publication," from one of the persons who go about asserting that the question is dead, and who are desperately afraid that the truth will come out and the corpse prove itself as troublesome as the body of Uncle Joseph in *The Wrong Box*, or that of the hunchback in the *Arabian Nights*. It was from the librarian of a borough that shall be nameless, which once acquired immortal fame for pronouncing *Jane Eyre* and *Adam Bede* unfit for circulation among its virtuous readers. He entreated me not to re-open

<sup>1</sup> This chapter appeared as an article in the *Hibbert Journal*, and is reprinted here by the kind permission of the Editor.

"this admittedly dangerous and pruriently interesting subject," and prophesied "nothing but damage to all the interests concerned from the stirring-up of this compost." He wrote that "the publication and issue of books of the class referred to rest upon a balance as delicate as the Balance of Power in Europe, and it seems to me that a well-meaning, cautious, and understanding man will be thankful that a balance is at the moment attained, and will imperil that by no act or word."

Without any breach of confidence I quote this view for what it is worth, merely remarking that readers in this borough, for whose refined taste Charlotte Brontë and George Eliot were not good enough, enjoy a plentiful supply of works by writers of a very different stamp, and presumably do not find them too bad. Further, I would remark that this delicate process of balancing what one class of reader demands against what another class objects to, of the just good enough and the not too bad, seems a curious method of deciding how a public authority should spend public funds for the good of the public. It looks as if somebody, individual or corporate, were shirking duties and responsibilities, and as long as responsibilities are not honestly faced the question now before us is very far from dead; the supposed corpse is likely to remain alive and vigorous, a source of anxiety and unpleasantness to everyone.

Many years' experience of British public libraries had led me to believe that a number of authorities were satisfied with some such timid and futile attitude as this, and thereby were jeopardizing the prestige and influence of an institution that might exert untold powers for good in the life of the nation. To obtain positive evidence on the subject I sent out in 1927 a questionnaire to some fifty public libraries in London, the largest provincial towns, and various other places where a large reading

public or the juxtaposition of several different classes would make the returns peculiarly informative. Three-fifths of the total number replied, and I take this opportunity of thanking them for their courtesy. Apparently those which did not respond had nothing to be proud of in their records. But facts enough were elicited to confirm the view I had already formed ; a more thorough-going inquiry was unnecessary. Yet some day, it may be hoped, when our separate libraries are organized into something like a system, with machinery for mutual help and exchange of experience, more general and more detailed reports on questions of policy and practice will be a matter of common routine. Then there will be no more excuse for not facing facts and making decisions, and the policy of hushing up vexatious questions and pretending there is nothing rotten in the state of Denmark will be dangerous, instead of a safe refuge from criticism.

These libraries were asked to say whether they admitted the works of the following authors, and, if so, which works, and how many copies of each. The authors included were, in alphabetical order: Ruby Ayres, Edgar Rice Burroughs, Hall Caine, Marie Corelli, Victoria Cross, Ethel M. Dell, Gilbert Frankau, Charles Garvice, Edith M. Hull, Gertrude Wentworth-James, Robert Keable, William Le Queux, Geoffrey Moss, Margaret Petersen, Gene Stratton Porter, "Rita," Cynthia Stockley, Edgar Wallace, Dolf Wyllarde. Now this is not put forward as a black list. Writers of miscellaneous kinds, of different ability, style, and general appeal were purposely mixed up. A much blacker list could easily be compiled if that were the object. At the same time, any discerning person will see at once that it comprises several authors of no literary significance whatever, and several who have achieved the rank of

best-sellers by unscrupulous pandering to the baser instincts of readers. Some are there on account of one vile book, some in spite of a single good one. Perhaps there is no writer on the list who is known at first-hand to any considerable number of intelligent readers, and the intelligent reader may safely rest satisfied with a second-hand account.

To be ready, if need be, with such an account, it seemed to be my bounden duty to fill up the gaps in my personal acquaintance with their works: I have actually performed the task, and can only trust that I have come through with faculties not entirely unhinged. Even the enjoyment of unconscious humour has its limits, especially when there is a striking uniformity in the way that humour arises. But there is no need now for a critical account of these writers. Their names are pretty well known, and what those names stand for is easily gathered from the Press that booms or the Press that ignores them, or from our knowledge of the kind of people who read them. Yet I have often thought that it would be worth while for some devoted person to make a closer study of this mob literature from Tudor times to the present day—for it has always been in existence and always been forgotten in a very few years—as a problem in the vagaries of social psychology.

One explanation is, however, desirable at this point. It is not primarily the moral character of these authors' works that is in question—I use the word "moral" in the narrow sense usually adopted in this country. Not for a moment would I suggest that this is a factor of minor importance in the choice of books for public circulation. This aspect cannot be ignored. There are authors on our list who have attained the kind of success they aimed at by writing books of a debasing and even a wilfully corrupting nature. But the most conspicuous

quality is their silliness. Their reading of life is childish, though so very far from childlike. It does not tally with our actual experience. The sentiments expressed are often an affront to common-sense. On the whole, the effect of reading such books on an adult mind is a stupefying sense of dullness. In short, they are bad literature.

The question whether a book is literature is not merely academic ; it is a practical question and even a utilitarian one. Setting aside considerations of style, which are of course of prime importance, but by some are thought to be academic, let us ask : Has a given novel any human interest ? Does it evoke an intelligible and an intelligent view of life, and one worth our attention ? Does it help us to see the world with clearer eyes, or show us some character or some phase of human existence that excites pity or fellow-feeling or laughter or exaltation ? If so, it has literary value, and it will also have ethical value. Few will deny the profound affinity between good taste and good morals. What is vile as literature, even when obtuse people assure us that it is on the side of the angels—as if the angels were of the same grade of intelligence—is directly or indirectly injurious to morals, simply because it debases the whole currency, and promotes a false, unintelligent, crudely material attitude to life. It lowers the standard of values. By its blindness to those qualities which are the essence of humane letters, it represses all that is distinctively human in those who read and fail to detect its falseness. Seen from this higher level, and thus seen in true perspective, all bad literature is immoral, including a great deal that is seldom recognized as such. Take, for example, two writers on our list, one deceased, the other still, unfortunately, a best-seller. I need not name these self-dubbed apostles of a supposed moral and spiritual enlightenment. Their spiritualism

is a crass and unredeemable materialism. Their ethics may be described as hysterical emotionalism. The world they depict is unlike any world man ever beheld, and lacks the coherence of a world of the imagination. These two between them have probably done more damage to our hard-won civilization than all the others on the list put together, in spite of the maxim some of them seem to be guided by, which a librarian quoted to me recently: "Give 'em sex every time."

Public libraries have been attacked over and over again on the ground that they are large purveyors of fiction. The reply is, that they do indeed provide very large quantities of such literature, but that the quality is kept high, and therefore they are acting in the best interests of the community. Fiction is the favourite reading to-day; fiction must be supplied, and that abundantly. Our conscience will be clear if the fiction is of unimpeachable excellence. There is another reply, based on different premises; that public libraries provide good books for those who will read them, but, in order to attract readers of undeveloped tastes who will be gradually educated to appreciate what is better, or simply to satisfy the ratepayer, who says he pays for the books and has a right to what he prefers, they also feel obliged to supply books that are admittedly inferior.

There are obviously here three answers to the critics. The first is the stout assertion that only sound literature is provided. The second, that compromise is desirable; that the bad, but popular, must be mixed with the good, so that the depraved reader may be trained out of his depravity. This we may call the Groundbait theory. The third frankly surrenders every claim to control by leaving the decision to the reader. We will call it the Tune and Piper plea, as it is never put forward without the old adage, supposed to be a crushing argument, that



he who pays the piper has the right to call the tune. Let us deal with these three lines of defence in turn.

The first, that only good literature is provided, can be tested by facts. The facts sent in reply to my questionnaire show that this line of defence is no longer tenable. On p. 302 is a summary of the returns, which requires no comment. It would be unfair to give the names of the libraries and so exalt them to a bad eminence which they do not deserve. A wider inquiry would probably have elicited still more depressing figures.

Evidently, if our library authorities want their critics to take seriously the assurance that they supply none but the best kinds of light literature, they must exercise much more care, and must act up to their own pretensions. Otherwise they will have to abandon this line of defence and fall back on the other two, the Groundbait theory and the Tune and Piper plea. We may suspect that both these latter arguments are vaguely at the back of their minds, even when they keep the flag flying over the first trench. In my own opinion the principle that sound literature and no other than sound literature should be provided is the only one on which a library kept up by public funds can legitimately take its stand. But the contrary is arguable, and I propose to discuss the question fairly. Meanwhile, let us review the other pleas.

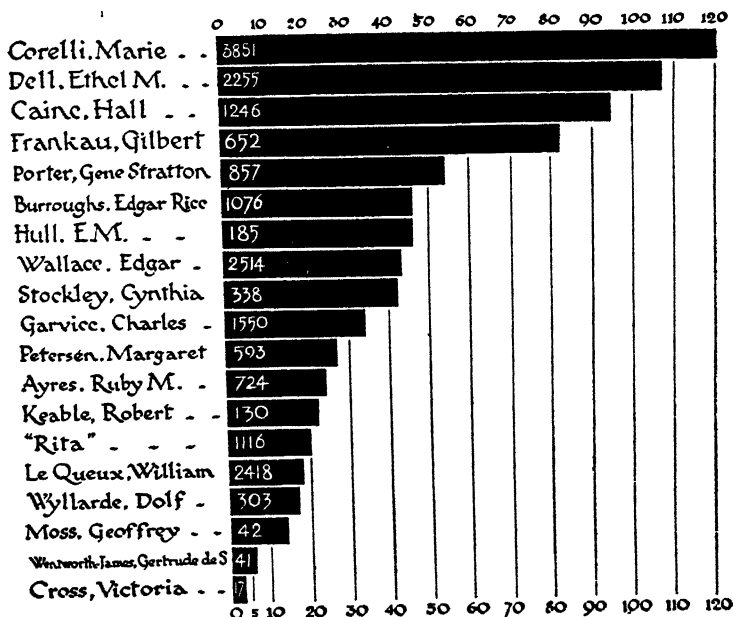
The Groundbait theory looks plausible on the face of it, and has been propounded again and again in various shapes and thoroughly discredited by experience. The people who flock to a public or a subscription library to read books which, in their crudeness, perverted standards of character and conduct, and total lack of literary merit, are on a par with the most objectionable product of the films, do not proceed to anything better so long as the supply is maintained. So far is the Groundbait theory at fault that it works in the opposite way. An ample

supply of trashy literature corrupts the taste of those malleable persons who might have become intelligent readers had they met with wise and sympathetic treatment. Probably some readers are irreclaimable. At any rate, librarians say so, and go on to ask, if these poor creatures can't do without their drugs, their opiates, their poisons, what right have we to deny them? No right

Author.	Author's Total Output.	No. of Separate Works in 33 Libraries.	No. of Copies in 33 Libraries.	Representation of each Work in 33 Libraries.
Ayres, Ruby M. .	30	329	724	24
Burroughs, Edgar Rice	23	282	1076	46
Caine, Hall . .	13	244	1246	95
Corelli, Marie . .	32	658	3851	120
Cross, Victoria . .	6	15	17	3
Dell, Ethel M. . .	21	539	2255	107
Frankau, Gilbert .	8	195	652	82
Garvice, Charles .	45	414	1550	34
Hull, E. M. . . .	4	64	185	46
James, Gertrude W. .	7	33	41	6
Keable, Robert . .	6	57	130	22
Le Queux, William .	134	1261	2418	18
Moss, Geoffrey . .	3	18	42	14
Petersen, Margaret .	22	258	593	27
Porter, Gene Stratton	16	258	857	54
"Rita" . . . . .	55	624	1116	20
Stockley, Cynthia .	8	117	338	42
Wallace, Edgar . .	58	904	2514	43
Wyllarde, Dolf . .	18	186	303	17

at all perhaps; nor can we prevent their getting the stuff. But don't let us waste public funds and prostitute a worthy institution like the public library by providing it there. The public library was not established for any such purpose, and to allow it to take an active part in an industry that is steadily muddling the brains and coarsening the fibre of a large section of the community is a contradiction of all that it stands for.

Let us be perfectly clear. This is not prohibition. Perhaps John Milton would not have had the same serene confidence that inspired him in *Areopagitica* were he writing in these days of a cheap and too often unscrupulous Press. But it is not proposed to interfere with the liberty of the subject by cutting off supplies; only let us tell the dram-drinker to go elsewhere, instead of



talking insincerely about half-doses and a homœopathic treatment that has never worked. Tastes can be improved. Demand can be moulded, at any rate in a large proportion of the cases with which the discriminating librarian has to deal. There is no better illustration than in this branch of library activities of the truth that supply creates demand. But the Groundbait theory runs counter to that policy; the method of the homœopath fails in matters of taste. The only legitimate way

in which a public body should concern itself with literary garbage is to send a sanitary vehicle to cart it away.

The other argument sounds still more plausible. The ratepayer is the owner of the library; he pays for the books, and accordingly expects to have the kind of book that he prefers. He who pays the piper has a right to call the tune. We have had this plea dinned into our ears as if it settled the matter beyond appeal. But I venture to describe it as a piece of claptrap, specious in terms, but entirely vicious as logic. The people who devour worthless and pernicious fiction, although for obvious reasons they make a glaring impression on the returns of books issued, are not the owners of the library. The library belongs to the community. True, there are ratepayers among them. Some of them have had to dip into their pockets to furnish their contribution to the piper's fee, and usually, being lukewarm friends of education or culture or genuine literature, they have paid the library rate—and probably the school rate—with no special alacrity. If they wish to select a tune let them turn to a piper who will put himself at their orders. The individual ratepayer, or even a group of ratepayers, has no more right to dictate what a library authority, appointed under an Act of Parliament by the whole body of ratepayers, should provide for the public benefit than to dictate what should be taught in what he might call his schools, what pictures should be purchased for his public art galleries, the Guildhall or the Tate, what antiquities by the British Museum, or sculpture, articles of virtu, and scientific objects at South Kensington.

Even if we had a plebiscite on the question, and a majority—which I cannot believe—voted for the policy that I am combating, it would not alter the case. You would have to go further, and repeal the Acts which constituted the public library. Otherwise a public

institution founded for a definite purpose would be turned in another direction and used for a totally different and a contrary purpose. Democracy does not do such things. Our institutions would be in a parlous state if this were the meaning of popular control.

I wonder whether those who claim these prerogatives for a certain class of reader are aware what kind of tunes would be called if a free choice were permitted? Some time ago I was waiting outside a railway station in south-east London when my eye fell on a display of the literature that is actually bought by readers of this class. I jotted down a list of a score or so, and it may fairly be taken as indicating the kind of stuff this section of the public would have if they were allowed a deciding voice in the choice of books for circulation. The contents may be judged by the titles:

A Woman of Temperament.

A Woman of Fire!

Violet Virtue.

Eve and the Man.

A Girl of London Town.

The Right to Motherhood.

The Hour of Temptation.

Betrayal.

Mistress or Wife?

The Wife, the Husband and the Lover.

Loose Love.

One Night.

A Night and a Day.

Three Nights.

Seven Nights.

Three Weeks.

Cards, Women and Wine!

We have now discussed the two arguments that are

held by some to justify the provision of bad books as well as good books in public libraries. It is time to return to the principle on which they might defy criticism if they only acted upon it consistently; the principle, namely, of providing only that which is of the best quality. No reasonable person nowadays would ban fiction or deny that the provision of light literature, if it be worthy of the name of literature, is a proper function of a public library. What are the services that a public library performs, for which, indeed, any library whatever exists? The three objects that occur to us, on reflection, are these, to supply information, to subserve education, to provide for recreation. Some libraries undertake a fourth duty, to furnish materials for research; but that might be considered as only a special variant of the first, the supply of information; and, anyhow, it comes within the scope only of the very large or the highly special library, and hardly concerns us.

There is no need to debate whether information is a legitimate end, or to ask whether education in the broadest sense is one of the purposes for which we have erected and equipped our public libraries. It would be easy to read so much into that word "education," meaning by it a wide and liberal exercise of our faculties throughout life, as to make it comprehend the third object, recreation. But it will be more convenient to keep this separate, since it is obviously under this particular head that our problem comes up for consideration. At the same time it must be confessed that the word is not quite satisfactory. For the sake of convenience we shall have to do some violence to meaning, and include under the one head a variety of purposes, intellectual, artistic, and moral, which can only be brought there if we call a truce for the time being with strict logic. At all events, by admitting that recreation is one of the

main objects for which a public library exists, we shall meet the other side on their own ground. We can assure them that we do not wish to deprive any reader of the things that minister to true recreation.

Now, what is the meaning of the word? Suppose we accept the basic meaning—that which re-creates, that which revives, that which renews and enhances vitality. There are amusements that merely kill time; there are pleasures—gambling, betting, dram-drinking might be instanced—which are obviously not re-creative. By holding to such an interpretation of the word as puts the thing definitely among those that subserve human life, we shall remain in agreement with general usage and at the same time come into line with those thinkers who have recognized pleasure or joy as the test of what is sound in art, in poetry, in literature, and in all those activities which enable us to fulfil ideally certain impulses of our nature that would else remain frustrate, incomplete, sterile. Sidney, in his championship long ago, under the name of poetry, of all the literature that we are discussing, accepted pleasure or delight as the criterion, and carefully distinguished delight from other effects—laughter, for instance, which he called “only a scornful tickling.” Shelley, also speaking of fiction in the widest sense as poetry, asserted emphatically that pleasure is the test. Pleasure is the sign of health and healthy activity in everything we do. Our highest pleasures arise from those activities which, for our present purpose, we call recreation. Substitute baser forms of indulgence for these and you have neither recreation nor pleasure, in its true meaning. “For the end of social corruption,” says Shelley, “is to destroy all sensibility to pleasure; and therefore it is corruption.” A doctrine in harmony with the teaching of our greatest appreciator of literary pleasures, Coleridge, whether he is inquiring how we

should judge of the goodness or badness of a piece of literature, or deploring the wane of his own genius :

“ Joy is the sweet voice, Joy the luminous cloud—

We in ourselves rejoice !

And thence flows all that charms or ear or sight,

All melodies the echoes of that voice,

All colours a suffusion from that light.”

And this pleasure, joy, happiness, which is the mark by which we identify what is good in poetry and fiction, is also the mark of something useful. Perhaps it is surprising to find Shelley among the utilitarians ; yet he says, “ The production and assurance of pleasure in this highest sense is true utility.” We may adopt a strictly utilitarian view of what the public library is for and what it should do for us ; and we shall still retain recreation as one of the main objects, side by side with information and education. Recreation is a useful thing because it promotes life and well-being. Contrarywise, those things that destroy all sensibility to pleasure, which tend to social corruption, are not recreations at all. By supplying facilities for mere mental dissipation the public library is not performing an act of kindness but doing something positively harmful, promoting the work of social corruption which it wants to counteract. If the worn-out charwoman and the jaded clerk, for whom our good-natured indulgence is asked, have not enough energy left to read anything but trash, we should be doing them a real service if we could prevent them from reading at all. There are recreations left which entail no mental strain, and are not harmful. It is an utter delusion to assume that reading is a good thing in itself, apart from the quality of what is read.

The truth is that what we call bad novels, the rubbishy productions of a debased commercial industry, are not mere novels that have failed to be good, not mere



unsuccessful attempts at genuine fiction, but another thing altogether. They are not works of art at all, not even bad works of art. They do not furnish recreation ; they do not result in what is worth calling pleasure. They are a substitute, intended to satisfy other sorts of appetite, appetites that have probably been implanted by the agencies that exploit them. For I do not believe that vicious tastes are normal, even in the undeveloped mind. Supply creates demand in evil things as in good. These are shams, brummagem goods manufactured in imitation of the real article, out of spurious material. They have nothing to express—ideas, view of life, human characters. Hence, when we are asked to admit that some compromise is essential in catering for a large public of varying grades of intelligence and culture, we must discriminate. Admittedly, to thrust culture down people's throats is an absurd enterprise. To expect the man in the street, without the appropriate introduction, to enjoy the most refined literature, to recognize the masterpieces at a glance and be content with nothing less, is a delusion. It is far more sensible to give him the second-best, and trust that he will ultimately come to understand and appreciate the best of all, which is probably the way most of us have done so if we review our mental history. Compromise in this sense is desirable, is necessary. But to compromise with the absolutely mischievous, with the demoralizing, is a different thing altogether. With that there should be no quarter. To adopt a Nietzschean attitude and affirm that a wide distinction should be drawn between the higher intelligences that are susceptible of culture and spiritual growth and the masses who are not worth cultivating, seems to me a gross dereliction of duty ; it is to repudiate responsibilities that cannot be evaded. Are we to leave the weaker brethren to their own devices, calmly pacifying them

with sham literature, bogus thought, merely sensational music, painting, and sculpture, whilst concentrating serious attention on those who respond at once to the finer influences of art? Are we to brand thousands and millions as hopelessly inferior? Instead of such a surrender we must take our proper share in the attempt to raise the whole mass of humanity.

The public library has its duty clearly assigned in this great effort. Far be it from me to depreciate the immense positive value of what it is doing, and what it has done. My aim has been to call a halt in what I believe to be a departure from the policy which librarians have themselves approved, and still proclaim. Statistics gathered from thirty of our largest and most influential libraries show that this policy is being tampered with, that there has been compromise, and compromise in the wrong direction. By purchasing thousands of copies of this deleterious literature the public libraries are actually helping to support a trade that is a social evil. The production of worthless and mischievous novels is become a sheltered industry.

Many of the replies to my questionnaire reveal a feeling of discomfort at the contradictions of the policy which has been forced on librarians. Some, it is true, regard their large records of issues with complacency, as if an enormous amount of reading were a matter for pride, irrespective of the quality. Some would have liked to compare the issues of bad novels with those of Meredith, Hardy, and Conrad. That would have been interesting, but irrelevant. The fact that many people read good books does not make it any the less lamentable that others are given facilities to read, and do read voraciously, the bad. Many librarians, with a friendly face for the Mammon of Unrighteousness, refuse to pick a quarrel, but leave the wretched victims of the dud novelist to fight for the

one well-thumbed copy or go and borrow it elsewhere at twopence a time. "I believe the demand for such fiction," writes the Stepney librarian, "to be the result of the systematic puffing of the stuff by the popular daily papers and the influence of picture palaces." The method adopted there is to buy what is demanded, but let it wear out and disappear when the demand abates. The authors on our list do not write for posterity. That the taste for them is a sign of ignorance that might be removed, and not of original sin, is shown by the experience of the Kent county librarian. The Kentish villagers ask for the much-advertised novelists, and when they find them not, choose some other writer and go away satisfied. The older people do not commit mental suicide if they cannot get what they want; the young take the good authors and quickly form literary friendships founded on merit. Such, too, is the experience of other librarians who are not obsessed by the Groundbait fallacy. In a public library situated in the midst of a large working-class population in Dublin, for instance, it is reported that borrowers who are introduced to the more popular work of the standard novelists "invariably follow on and read others by the same author." At Coventry books of the better class are generously duplicated, sometimes to the extent of fifty copies of a single work, with admirable results. "What the public would call an inadequate selection of Ruby M. Ayres," to exemplify the corresponding restriction of the other class, "only serves as a basis for requests for more copies, whereas the entire absence of Ruby M. Ayres leads the readers to other sources." Thus, when a harassed librarian pleads: "We try to keep up to a reasonable standard; but certain books are demanded and we have to provide them," he despairs of a problem that is by no means desperate.

We must appeal to library authorities to consider the question from the social point of view, which will be found to coincide with the literary point of view, and to come to a decision and stand to it. Timid concessions are not merely inconsistent with the declared aims of the public library; they are inimical to those aims. The public library is now a well-established institution performing services of the highest social value. It can safely drop those popular devices which were once thought necessary for its existence. By trying to compete with the cinema and other rivals it merely lowers its own dignity and seriously impairs its own usefulness.

# A SELECTION OF AIDS AND GUIDE-BOOKS



# A SELECTION OF AIDS AND GUIDE-BOOKS

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